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Monday, 10 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

Address by Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis, His Excellency the Right Honourable Mr. Kennedy Simmonds, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Simmonds (Saint Kitts and Nevis): Once again I am proud and honoured to have the opportunity to address this assembly of nations and to convey to representatives fraternal and cordial greetings from the Government and people of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The convening of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations provides the Governments of all Member States with an important opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to the cause of peace, democracy and the pursuit of a higher quality of life for our peoples.

I wish to join other representatives by extending warmest congratulations from the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis to you, Mr. President, on your election to preside at this session of the General Assembly. I assure you of my Government's continued support and cooperation.

Allow me, Sir, to thank the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, for the astute and most able manner in which he conducted and guided the affairs of this body during its forty-eighth session despite unprecedented trials and numerous challenges. His resolve and his successes give credence to his commitment to the planting of seeds of cooperation and goodwill in every corner of the globe to ensure that our children and grandchildren may feast on harvests of peace, equality, freedom and democracy.

The Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has faced many problems of great complexity during the past year. I wish to congratulate him on the outstanding manner in which he has been carrying out the mandate of the Organization.

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis shares the commitment to democracy, respect for human dignity and

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the protection of human rights. Our people enjoy the effective workings of the democratic process and the safeguards provided by its institutions. We are determined to do all that we can, in our time, to ensure that future generations too will be able to exercise their democratic freedoms in an atmosphere of political stability.

There is an ever-increasing thirst for democracy throughout the world. In our hemisphere, military regimes have been giving way to democratically elected Governments.

Nowhere has this process been more dramatic than in Haiti, where, in 1991, the people, in free and fair elections under the keen scrutiny of the international community, chose Jean-Bertrand Aristide as their President. For almost four years the will of the people of Haiti and the resolve of the international community have been callously frustrated by the military, who usurped and have held on to power.

Saint Kitts and Nevis is in full agreement with the resolute action taken by the United States, with the support of the international community, to ensure compliance with Security Council resolution 940 (1994). The multinational force has been carrying out its work with dedication, professionalism and restraint. While there have been some untoward incidents, we must not be deterred. We must be prepared to stay the course for the benefit of the people of Haiti and for the growth of stable democracy in this hemisphere.

The process of establishing democracy will not end with the return of President Aristide; it will have just begun. In order to support the process, it is absolutely essential that the international community be ready to mobilize significant financial and technical resources to ensure the rebuilding of Haiti's economy and institutions - institutions destroyed by decades of neglect and mismanagement. Saint Kitts and Nevis stands ready to assist in the long and arduous task of helping the Haitian people rebuild their economy.

For many years the international community struggled to bring democracy to the majority of the people of South Africa. Today South Africa can be held up as a beacon of hope and a testament to the triumph of democracy. Last year my delegation welcomed the announcement of the holding of non-racial and multi-party elections - something for which my Government had been calling since joining this Organization 11 years ago. We have successfully and emphatically closed the final chapter of the brutal and unjust system of apartheid, and a new and democratic South Africa has emerged from its ashes.

However, despite the successes, the new South Africa is still on the threshold of unprecedented challenges. The journey is long and arduous, but the country's leaders and its people have a wonderful opportunity to right historical wrongs while at the same time charting a new and purposeful course in their future. The amalgamated voice of the people of South Africa has been heard, not only within that country but the world over. They have put their faith in the democratic process. As South Africa sails the fresh and often tumultuous waters of representative democracy and attempts to institutionalize social justice, St. Kitts and Nevis reiterates its commitment to join with the international community to give that country and its people the requisite support to develop lasting democratic and social institutions to ensure that democracy does work and is seen to work for every single citizen.

The contrasting realities of our world are quite real and apparent. Whenever we believe that we have solved one major problem, another presents itself elsewhere. This notwithstanding, we can all be pleased at the current movement towards peace under way in the Middle East. Not long ago the prospect of peace in any form seemed practically impossible. However, today the peace process seems to be gaining a firm foothold in that region. The international community must be ready to give unreserved support to that process and afford it more durable mechanisms for success.

My Government welcomes the consolidation of peace and the efforts at cooperation between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. No one could have predicted that so much would have been possible, and in so short a time. The rapidly changing face of Middle East politics augurs well for the overall peace process, quality of life and stability of the entire region. In this spirit, my delegation applauds the joint Declaration officially ending the state of belligerency between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This historic event marks yet another bold and positive step on the road to ensuring a lasting peace in the Middle East. My Government calls upon the countries in the Middle East to give peace a practical chance.

As prospects for peace continue to flourish in the Middle East, the tranquillity of the Gulf region is once again being threatened by an Iraqi troop build-up near the

Kuwait border. It is time for the people of Kuwait to feel secure within their own borders. It is time for full compliance by Iraq with Security Council resolutions pertaining to the aggression against Kuwait. It is time for Kuwait nationals detained in Iraq to be returned to their homeland. It is time for Iraq to pursue peaceful policies with its neighbours. Once again the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis urges the Government of Iraq to respect the finalization of the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq, which was accomplished by the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission on 20 May 1993, and to respect and abide by Security Council resolution 833 (1993), which guarantees the inviolability of the boundary between the two States. It is the fervent hope of the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis that international support for this resolution will act as a deterrent, both now and in the future, against conflict between Kuwait and Iraq and will at the same time help enhance stability and security in the region.

The constantly changing realities of the present world situation call for Member Governments to harden traditional attitudes while making genuine attempts to search for pragmatic solutions requiring different and unprecedented approaches and compromises. It was against this backdrop that at the last session of the General Assembly my Government called upon the warring factions in the Yugoslavian conflict to come to the negotiating table.

We note with great satisfaction that the leaders of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzergovina have managed to arrive at a peaceful settlement of disputes. However, my Government abhors the wanton murder, "ethnic cleansing" and systematic persecution of innocent people which still characterize the brutal conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These atrocities and the flagrant and consistent violation of human rights are an affront to everything we as human beings hold sacred. The international community must continue to express its just indignation at the atrocities in this arena of conflict. At the same time, we must pursue all initiatives to find a just and lasting solution, preferably at the negotiating table.

Last year my delegation commended this body for its tireless efforts to keep the international community from the brink of nuclear warfare and called upon all countries signatories to the Treaty on non-proliferation to continue to abide by it and to urge those who had not yet become parties to it to do so. We repeat this plea today. We also look forward to an indefinite ban on all nuclear testing.

I must reiterate, however, that we should not stop there, but should aim also for the non-proliferation of all weapons, including chemical, biological and conventional. In this regard, St. Kitts and Nevis also supports the moratorium on the export of land-mines, and goes even further by calling for a ban on their manufacture as well as their export. Land-mines continue to cause tremendous misery and untold hardship for many populations world-wide long after conflicts have ended. In most cases the victims of these land-mines are poor farmers and innocent children.

It is our sacred and solemn responsibility as world leaders to ensure a safe world for our nation's children. My delegation therefore congratulates the United Nations on its consistent efforts to fulfil its humanitarian missions in the many different theatres of tragic suffering world-wide. The humanitarian catastrophe which has been unfolding in Rwanda threatens to destabilize the fragile economic and political balance of its neighbours. The scope and scale of this human disaster, unprecedented in the history of modern-day Africa, should catapult us to seek a peaceful end to the crisis. Reports on the revolting policy of "ethnic cleansing" and indiscriminate massacres of women and children strike a familiar, mind-wrenching note in our collective psyche.

Although its resources are minuscule, St. Kitts and Nevis could not fail to make a financial contribution to the United Nations relief effort in Rwanda. We must act decisively to mobilize more resources from every possible source to intensify the relief effort in that tragic country.

We, the Members of the United Nations cannot pamper our consciences with pious speeches on what the United Nations ought to do to alleviate the suffering, while at the same time rendering the Organization impotent by refusing to give it the necessary financial and material capabilities it so desperately needs to carry out its functions more effectively.

The United Nations is being called upon with greater frequency to respond to a greater variety of conflicts, suffering and development needs. If the Organization is to be able to respond effectively, we must evaluate from time to time not only our resources, but the way in which we manage those resources, and ensure that there is greater accountability in such management. In short, the United Nations, recognizing the responsibilities entrusted to it by the international community, must be more accountable to its Members.

What we are suggesting, therefore, is a more balanced relationship predicated on the principles of responsibility and accountability. The delegation of Saint Kitts and Nevis welcomes the creation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services; its creation is not an end in itself, but a means to ensure that there is greater accountability within the Organization.

We must remain cognizant of the fact that the fundamental sovereignty of all States, large or small, is respected equally by the United Nations. If necessary, the United Nations will protect the rights of the small against the power of the large. It has institutionalized the rights of small and micro States to exist and to coexist with the big and powerful nations. All independent States, therefore, irrespective of their size and population, are equal under international law. Every effort should be made, therefore, to enable small States to participate more fully in the day-to-day decision-making process of the United Nations. One way to achieve this is through more equitable geographical representation within the Secretariat, and I appeal for this to be implemented.

Another way in which the United Nations can be made more globally inclusive is by bringing more Members into the fold. Last year, my Government called upon the United Nations to begin the process that would lead to the ultimate re-admission of the Republic of China in Taiwan into the United Nations.

My Government stands firmly behind that appeal and we repeat this appeal here today. The Republic of China in Taiwan continues to adhere to the Charter of the United Nations and to govern itself by the principles of international and humanitarian law. It has proven repeatedly that it is a country committed to peace, democracy and development, not only for its 21 million people, who are entitled to proper representation internationally, but for all peoples, that their quality of life may be improved. The Republic of China in Taiwan is a major international player in commerce, trade and development assistance, and would make a significant contribution to the work of the United Nations.

I would now like to turn our attention to the question of sustainable development and small States, and to commend quite highly the efforts of the United Nations in bringing the reality and concerns of small island developing States to the forefront of international focus.

The Declaration of Barbados is a step in the right direction. It recognizes that small island developing States have special and peculiar needs. We, in small island developing States have been saying this for a long time. Our very survival as a people and as independent States is dependent on the sustainable development of our human resources and the maximization of our scarce material resources. These limited material resources are under constant and severe stress despite our efforts.

Although we recognize the Conference in Barbados as a giant step for small island developing States, the discussion must be taken much further, beyond conference halls and into communities, and translated into practical tangible benefits. In Saint Kitts and Nevis, for instance, over the past ten years we have been engaged in projects and programmes whereby we seek to create a sound and pragmatic balance between economic and social development, on the one hand, and environmental protection on the other.

However, existing problems and innovative attempts by small island developing States to improve their standard of living very rarely receive consistent support from the developed world. Micro States like Saint Kitts and Nevis are being called upon to prove their viability within the international community. The irony lies in the fact that when we manage to raise our standard of living to a decent level, the international community withdraws or reduces its support under the pretext that our GNP per capita is too high.

I do not believe that we should have to reiterate the vulnerability index of small States like mine. Although Saint Kitts and Nevis does not produce or use any significant amount of material to damage the ozone layer or contribute to coastal erosion and rising sea levels, we are among those which suffer most as a result of their impact. Small island States like mine suffer greatly from environmental and natural disasters, yet we lack the capacity to respond to and recover from them. The objective reality of our individual and collective experience speaks volumes. We have seen how less than a month ago, tropical storm Debbie — insignificant, really, as a tropical storm, not strong enough to be a hurricane — devastated the banana industry in Saint Lucia, thus wreaking havoc on that country's economy.

We need special attention. We need special regimes. As I have done in the past, I appeal for greater equity within the international economic system. The time has come for the developed world to rethink the outdated policy of trying to make a single prescription fit all countries. We need to develop a more durable, and

country-specific approach, based on fairness, economic circumstance and need. Above all, the concept of the vulnerability index must become part of the economic language and armamentarium of all multilateral and national development institutions.

Indeed, the developing world should not view our small island Caribbean States as dumping grounds for over-produced consumer items, but see us as developing economies whose fragile banana and sugar exports need to be protected.

The Declaration of Barbados underscores the fact that small island States have sovereign rights over their natural resources. The developed world, therefore, cannot claim paternity over our biodiversity under the pretext that their technology was used.

Further, on the issue of the environment, I would like to call upon the developed countries to de-link economic assistance, trade and investment from environmental protection. In most cases, small island developing States are penalized for allegedly exploiting limited resources and for so-called environmental degradation.

I urge the international community to assist developing countries to obtain the wherewithal to gauge the exploitation of resources and to do environmental impact assessments so as to ensure that the precarious balance is maintained.

Social, economic and political advancement in small developing countries should not be held to ransom by the industrialized world as a way of punishing them for environmental degradation. The protection and preservation of the environment is a global responsibility and must engender a collective approach. The industrialized world must take responsibility for much of the damage to the environment and work towards a framework for international cooperation and partnership in preserving it.

Developing countries ought to be given assistance and be presented with alternatives to destroying the forest or depleting the limited resources at their disposal. While the international community moves ever closer to the realization of economic blocs, special attention must also be devoted to the fragile commodities export sector in some of these countries, and the need for special regimes to be put in place to ensure the viability of most of these small economies, which do not have the advantage of economies of scale and large consumer markets.

I should like to repeat my fervent appeal to Governments of developed countries and to multilateral agencies to become more supportive of and responsive to the needs of small developing countries by providing the technical assistance, information-sharing, technology transfer and investments, and to promote human resource development through education and training.

I call on the international community to honour its commitment made in Barbados in May 1994:

> "The international community should cooperate with small island developing States in the implementation of the Programme of Action ... by providing effective means, including adequate, predictable new and additional financial resources in accordance with chapter 33 of Agenda 21; facilitating the transfer of environmentally sound technology, including on concessional and preferential terms as mutually agreed". *(A/CONF.167/9, Annex I, Part Two, III.1)*

This will ensure success in achieving our goal of sustainable development.

There is nothing more noble than the gift of life. At the important and historic World Summit for Children of 1990, participating Governments agreed to make the world a much safer place for future generations of children. At the United Nations Conference on small States, we decided to commit our efforts to the efficient use of land resources, to work towards creating better education and improved health care, and to exploit natural resources on a sustainable basis.

If we achieve this, we shall indeed be bequeathing to our children and their children a much safer world. It is against the backdrop of safeguarding our children's future that the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis participated in the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. We fully support the view that the issue of population control must be addressed.

Although we share the view that a population explosion may eventually threaten the Earth's capacity to provide in a sustainable manner, we do not believe that simply trying to control population growth will by itself solve the serious problems that we are facing today. My Government is of the view that a concerted attempt to redeploy much of the world's resources, to discover new resources and to use them more equitably would better serve the interest of development for all peoples.

I cannot but remind us all that the international menace of drugs and drug trafficking still looms large. The danger and the trade are ever-increasing. We should continue to wage a determined and aggressive war on drug trafficking and narco-terrorism, which seek to undermine and unravel the social and political fabric of our societies.

The challenges facing the United Nations are monumental, but not more so than those facing individual nations, large or small, or individuals in poor communities, as well as in affluent societies. We occupy a global common. Therefore, we must together find practical solutions to the problems of hunger, poverty, war, crime, development and freedom in every corner of our world. If we fail, none will be secure, none will be at peace, none will be free.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of St. Kitts and Nevis for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of St. Kitts and Nevis, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business of Barbados, Her Excellency the Honourable Billie Miller, on whom I now call.

Ms. Miller (Barbados): Mr President, it is a pleasure for me to congratulate you, Foreign Minister Essy, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. The Barbados delegation has cooperated closely with Your Excellency in the past, and we have every confidence that you will guide the work of this session with distinction.

It is with a deep sense of pride and satisfaction that I also offer my Government's congratulations to our outgoing President, Ambassador Rudy Insanally of Guyana. As the first representative from the Caribbean to hold that high office, Ambassador Insanally has represented the entire region with exemplary skill and diplomacy, and has left much seminal work for us to build upon over the coming months.

I also extend the good wishes of the Barbados Government to our distinguished Secretary-General, Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whom the Barbadian people had the honour of receiving in Bridgetown earlier this year. We offer him our continued support in his difficult task at the helm of the Organization at so crucial an epoch in world affairs.

On 23 June this year, the Republic of South Africa received a warm and emotional welcome back to this Hall as it formally resumed its participation in the work of the Assembly.

As it did then, Barbados warmly welcomes the return of South Africa to the community of nations. As we rejoice at the demise of apartheid, we are still greatly moved by the tremendous sacrifices made by the men, women and children of South Africa that made a democratic South Africa possible, and by the steadfastness and the statesmanship of the South African leaders, particularly President Mandela, whose great stature and wisdom captivated this body some seven days ago. We also acknowledge the sterling contribution of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which for 32 years worked unremittingly to achieve this remarkable outcome.

South Africa is well poised to play a significant role in this Organization, and the international community has much to learn from the South African experience.

It is, however, imperative that we recognize that South Africa still very much needs our assistance with the great challenges that lie ahead. The Government of Barbados pledges to support the Government of South Africa as it strives to improve the quality of life for its citizens.

Barbados is greatly encouraged by the progress made in the search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East since the signing of the Washington Declaration by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in September last year. The Cairo Accord, which paved the way for the commencement of Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and in Jericho, and the Israeli-Jordanian Declaration, signed in Washington in July this year, are welcome steps on the difficult path towards the attainment of peace in that region.

Barbados hopes that future resolutions on the Middle East will be reflective of these advances and will serve as a fillip to the parties engaged in the negotiation process as they strive to achieve a comprehensive peace in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978).

The people of Barbados went to the polls on 6 September and, in an incident-free election, voted a new Government into office. I am honoured to be a part of that new order. The democracy that Barbados practices is ingrained in the culture and habits of its people. For them, freedom of speech and association and freedom to vote at regular intervals for a Government of their choice and to have the Government installed in an immediate and orderly transfer of power are the simple and natural norms of life. Yet, sadly, what we in Barbados take for granted, others close by in our own hemisphere still struggle to achieve.

My country, Barbados, has gained international recognition for its comprehensive network of social services, its people-oriented development policies and its high quality of life, which have earned it first place in the developing world in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index. The present Government of the Barbados Labour Party fully recognizes the challenges that lie ahead for a small, middle-income country like Barbados to sustain that achievement in an international economic environment that continues to marginalize the small and fragile in the developing world. With few resource endowments, our survival must depend exclusively on the skills of our industrial and committed people and on the God-given beauty of our natural environment.

The new Government has responded immediately to that challenge in its manifesto "Charter for Change", a fundamental policy document that represents a solemn compact by this Government to work together with its citizens in seeking for Barbados a strong, strategic position in the global community of nations as we approach the twenty-first century. We are determined to use the opportunities created by the technological and communications revolution to overcome the obstacle of size and to harness our natural and strategic assets to convert Barbados into a full-service economy. We will encourage the development of tourism and the international financial services and informatics sectors to their fullest potential. We will create a business-friendly environment that will be conducive to new investment, both local and foreign. We will facilitate the growth and development of the small-business sector and encourage entrepreneurship. A radically restructured Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business, under my direction, has been put in place to spearhead this endeavour.

Against this background, the people of Barbados view with concern the tragic situation of Haiti. For far too long Haiti has been a burden on the collective conscience of the region. For too long a just and equitable solution has not only eluded the countries in our own hemisphere, but eluded also the grasp of the Security Council of the United Nations. We are greatly encouraged that the deployment into Haiti of the multinational force took place under peaceful circumstances and that the spectre of a bloody confrontation was averted. The participation of Barbados in the multinational force and the United Nations Mission in Haiti, authorized by Security Council resolution 940 (1994), is testimony to our commitment to ensuring that the will of the Haitian people is finally respected and their lawful President and his administration restored to office without delay. The clear terms of resolution 940 (1994) must be honoured in full, and the power of a brutal and lawless military and its callous leadership effectively and permanently neutralized.

As stated by Prime Minister Owen Arthur of Barbados in his recent address at the White House on behalf of the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM):

> "Where democracy has taken root, it should be encouraged to grow and to flourish. Like the Soviet Union and South Africa, Haiti too deserves its rendezvous with democracy. The Haitian people wished for it. They suffered for it. They voted for it. And now they are dying for it."

Haiti's rendezvous with democracy has now begun in earnest. Hope is finally returning to a people that for a very long time had felt that all was lost. But as we in CARICOM have warned on numerous previous occasions, the ballot box is merely the beginning of the democratic process. The international community must now orchestrate a massive effort to put in place the institutional infrastructure necessary to maintain and strengthen the fledgling Haitian democracy and to bury forever the ghosts of the past. The reconstruction of Haiti entails the creation of conditions that will ensure that the rights and freedoms of all Haitian people are respected. It must also respond effectively to the critical development needs of the Haitian population and to their just aspirations to share equitably in the resources of their country.

The Governments of the Caribbean Community are committed to playing their part in this vital phase of the process, and to this end have agreed to provide assistance, in concert with other members of the international community, in the development of a civilian

force as a professional organization for maintaining the peace and respect for human rights in Haiti. They are also prepared to make available to the constitutionally appointed authorities in Haiti a cadre of officers from the public service of the member States of CARICOM to provide training in public administration, the conduct of elections and other activities in support of the institutionalization of the democratic process.

As we look across the Caribbean Community, we see much that gives us cause for hope. The private and public sectors of our subregion are collaborating more and more, while, at the same time, intergovernmental cooperation has increased. The political dialogue between Heads of Government is flourishing, and economic cooperation is expanding. Concerted efforts are also being made to boost intraregional trade and to improve the economic, social and cultural well-being of our peoples.

This year the Caribbean Community celebrated its twenty-first anniversary. A pioneer among integration movements in our hemisphere, CARICOM has sought to respond to the reality that Caribbean peoples share a common destiny, which is best realized through coordination and cooperation in pursuit of their economic, social and political well-being.

This year also, building on the foundations laid by many statesmen of the Caribbean and on the ideas most recently developed by the West Indian Commission, the leaders of 25 States whose shores are washed by the Caribbean Sea met at Cartagena, Colombia, to sign the Convention establishing the Association of Caribbean States. The Association will bring together in their common pursuit of development 40 Caribbean-basin States, countries and territories with a total population of 200 million. Its stated aims are: to promote, utilize and develop the collective capabilities of the Caribbean region to achieve sustainable cultural economic, social, scientific and technological advancement; to develop the potential of the Caribbean Sea through interaction among member States and with third parties; to promote an enhanced economic space for trade and investment with opportunities for cooperation and concerted action, in order to increase the benefits which accrue to the peoples of the Caribbean from their resources and assets, including the Caribbean Sea; and to establish, consolidate and augment, as appropriate, institutional structures and cooperation agreements responsive to the various cultural identities, developmental needs and innovative systems within the region.

Barbados fully supports the aims of the Association and welcomes its establishment as an important step in the consolidation of the regional integration effort. But our aims to foster development across the Caribbean will not be complete until all of the partners are free to participate on an equal footing. In this regard we believe the time has come to remove the last vestige of cold-war rivalry from our hemisphere. We join the international community in appealing to the United States to lift its punitive economic embargo on Cuba and to facilitate the economic reintegration of that neighbouring State into the world economy. We urge that political will be found to resolve the remaining differences between the two countries through further dialogue.

Earlier this year, 116 countries and 150 non-governmental organizations were represented at the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados. The first follow-up activity to be held in fulfillment of a mandate from the International Conference on Environment and Development, the "Earth summit", the Conference aimed to develop a blueprint of priority actions for the implementation of Agenda 21 in the specific context of small island developing States. The results of the Conference will shortly come before the General Assembly for its endorsement at this session. We urge the international community to lend its full support to the measures proposed to ensure sustained follow-up and implementation of the proposals contained in the Barbados Programme of Action.

On 16 November, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea will come into force, 12 years after it was opened for signature at Montego Bay. We welcome the recent developments which have enhanced the prospects of universal participation in the Convention and look forward to the inauguration of the work of its relevant organs. We look forward too to the successful conclusion next year of the Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and to the adoption of a legally binding regime to regulate the conservation and management of these threatened stocks.

The wise observation by the Secretary-General that "development is a fundamental right and the strongest foundation for peace" has been recognized by the General Assembly, which in recent years has been giving priority attention to social development by convening a number of international conferences devoted primarily to social and economic issues, as envisaged in Article 55 of the Charter.

The recent International Conference on Population and Development spoke volumes about the changing nature of international dialogue and the changing role of women. In greater numbers and with greater strength, civil society in the form of non-governmental organizations worked alongside Governments to craft a plan of action which might realistically address the reproductive health of women and the broader needs of women in the development process. We owe a debt of gratitude to Ms. Nafis Sadik, Mr. Fred Sai and the rest of the Conference leadership, who pushed for and achieved a broad consensus on many difficult issues which fall into the realm of the population and development dialogue.

For my country, the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Plan of Action confirm much of the effort which has been spent on improving women's access to family planning and health services. I stand before the Assembly as an example of the progressive attitude which Barbadians hold regarding women's status and leadership potential. I am also reminded that we too need to work on areas highlighted by the population Conference proceedings: difficult issues such as reducing maternal mortality, addressing the needs of special groups such as youth, and looking at how our policies and programmes further women's empowerment.

Still, I am heartened by the openness of the United Nations processes to the contributions of citizens' groups alongside Governments, and will watch with great interest the progress at the social summit and women's conference. These conferences, together with the 1990 World Summit for Children and the 1992 Rio de Janiero Conference, extend along a continuum which urges action to look into the difficulties faced by our citizens and at how Government policies can relieve the uneven pressures which are put upon women.

Barbados considers that these meetings are of vital importance and that their core themes demand the adoption of a meaningful programme of action that would demonstrate a firm commitment to the oft-repeated concept that the human being should indeed be placed at the centre of development. Poverty, unemployment, gender equality, children's rights and other integrated issues must be tackled with the same urgency and resolve as other aspirations of the Charter if this Organization intends to signal a true turning-point in its human-development strategy.

The United Nations has contributed significantly to promoting and ensuring respect for and observance of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights on 10 December 1948. The legal framework and the established human rights machinery have been greatly strengthened by the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights held at Vienna in June 1993. The Conference affirmed that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and especially emphasized that the right to development is a basic human right.

At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly honoured the Latin American and Caribbean region by appointing His Excellency Mr. José Ayala Lasso of Ecuador as the first United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as a first step in implementing the Vienna Declaration. At its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly must now seek with equal vigour to implement the other important measures of the Vienna Declaration. Barbados urges that the Working Group on Human Rights pursue its mandate in a coherent, transparent and balanced manner in order that the long-term interests of human rights may be truly served.

Barbados believes that every human being is entitled to the unfettered enjoyment of all human rights and that the ultimate human right is the right to life. In this context, we urge that the Assembly give serious consideration at this session to the harmful impact that illicit drug trafficking, organized transnational crime and terrorism have on the effective enjoyment of human rights. Barbados welcomes the recent decision of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to establish a working group to pursue areas of collaboration with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in maritime trafficking. We are also encouraged by the progress the Working Group has made on the draft statute for an international criminal court and support the recommendation by the International Law Commission that the General Assembly convene an international conference of plenipotentiaries to study the draft statute and to conclude a convention on the establishment of an international criminal court.

My Government has always been a strong supporter of the United Nations. We believe that in the emerging new world order it is more critical than ever for the United Nations to be capable of fulfilling its role as the primary guarantor of the security and independence of small States, and as the protector of the powerless and economically vulnerable who form the vast majority of its membership. It is also important for the small, but

morally authoritative, voices of this world body to continue to stress the absolute necessity for the international community to use equitably and responsibly the powers conferred upon it in the Charter.

Over the past year, priority attention has been given in the work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to the task of elaborating an Agenda for Development as a necessary corollary to, and indeed a prerequisite for, the "Agenda for Peace". We have taken careful note of the Secretary-General's report to the forty-eighth session in this regard and look forward to giving detailed consideration to the recommendations which he will present in his report to this session.

While we recognize that the United Nations has an inescapable responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, we must acknowledge also that peace and development are indivisible. The root causes of most conflicts are to be found in the legacy of poverty and dispossession that underdevelopment engenders. While we agree that the world body must of necessity respond to critical conflict situations as they arise, it must at the same time be pointed out that the vast majority of the world's population does not live in a state of war or civil conflict. The betterment of the economic and social conditions of that majority deserves a central place in the deliberative and decision-making bodies of the United Nations and must be the principal objective of an Agenda for Development.

An Agenda for Development must promote a new consensus on international cooperation for development and an integrated approach which is people-centred. Furthermore, it must be based on creating a new cooperative relationship between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, one which recognizes the fundamental importance of the social dimension to development. The policies pursued by these institutions over the past decade, particularly within the framework of structural-adjustment programmes, have left a legacy which convinces us of the need for radical reform.

We must remind ourselves that the improvement of human well-being is the fundamental criterion to which the development objective must respond. There is little value in short-term economic growth if the measures used to attain it result inevitably in social disintegration. The Barbados delegation therefore strongly supports the view of the South Centre that fresh approaches must be sought and a new social contract established if social, political and economic objectives are to be reconciled. The United Nations is the appropriate forum to ensure that this reconciliation of objectives can be promoted in a universal, transparent and democratic manner.

Several useful views have emerged over the past year during the discussion of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. We look forward to an intensification of these discussions during the forty-ninth session. Any enlargement of the Council must only be contemplated within a context that deals also with the issue of equitable geographical representation, the question of the veto, and the question of increasing the transparency of the operations of the Council and its accountability to the wider international community. Decisions arrived at hastily to deal with only one aspect of the issue, or merely to respond to an arbitrary deadline of next year's celebrations, will not provide a lasting solution to this critical issue.

The United Nations will have reached a remarkable milestone in 1995 as it celebrates 50 years of tireless service to the goal of enabling all mankind to live in dignity and enjoy better standards of life in larger freedom. While it is fitting that we acknowledge this milestone with appropriate ceremony, we must recognize that the United Nations will be called upon to face challenges in the twenty-first century that could be immeasurably more difficult than those of the previous era. Global stability will depend more and more on the ability of the United Nations to promote economic and social justice than on its ability to silence guns.

The kind of challenges I have in mind are poignantly etched in the following quotation from an unpublished work in progress entitled "The Rwanda Poem" by the distinguished Barbadian poet and writer Mr. Kamau Brathwaite, who, only a few days ago, received the Neustadt International Prize for Literature:

"Sa/hell crumbles into these flickering miles
Miles of the silences of holes
Of the cold dry moon in our belly
Marrow burning its protein into its sound
Skin smouldering to ash
Holocaust of dome - there is no music anywhere
Heads propped up on sticks of skeletons
Bald headed children naked of all else
But large deep agate space-age eyes"

Global stability will be difficult to maintain if the cries of the majority of the world's peoples, whose lives

are marked by a lack of food, shelter and education and who are afflicted by poverty, disease, and other forms of social misery, continue to go unheeded and are merely reflected as glaring statistics in United Nations reports on the world's social situation.

It is Barbados' belief that the challenge that will confront the United Nations in the era ahead will lie undoubtedly in the humanitarian sphere. This Organization is the only universal body with the legitimacy to take up this challenge. But if it is to meet this challenge successfully, it must be made more efficient, effective and alert. In this context, prevention must supersede reaction.

As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization next year, "We the peoples" must renew our commitment to this unique body and strive to ensure its relevance to the twenty-first century. Mr. President, be assured of Barbados' commitment to these endeavours.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Dame Mary Eugenia Charles, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I have pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica, Her Excellency The Honourable Mary Eugenia Charles. I invite her to address the General Assembly.

Dame Mary Eugenia Charles (Dominica): Mr. President, permit me to extend my delegation's congratulations to you and your country, Côte d'Ivoire, on the occasion of your election to the high office of the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that with your proven diplomatic skills and considerable experience the affairs of the General Assembly will be conducted in a manner that will redound to the credit of this institution. At the same time I must express my delegation's heartfelt appreciation and thanks to your immediate predecessor in office, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, for the competence which he demonstrated in the discharge of his duties. His commendable performance is a source of pride to me as it is to all citizens of the Caribbean region.

(spoke in French)

I am very happy that we are here with you today, Sir.

(spoke in English)

While the maintenance of peace and security remains the main objective of the United Nations, the global environment, the widening gap between rich and poor nations, the failure of the ill-defined new world order to materialize, and the forces released by the ending of the cold war present the Organization with new problems and challenges. As regional conflicts erupt, the consequential increase in the number of displaced persons and refugees exerts greater pressure on the United Nations peace-keeping apparatus at a time when its available resources are already severely taxed. It is imperative, therefore, that the United Nations continue with its restructuring programme and with those initiatives calculated to increase efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance the capability of the Organization to achieve desirable results. However, cost-effectiveness, commendable as that may be, should not be at the expense of those worthwhile programmes designed to benefit small developing nations. We firmly believe that the United Nations has the capacity to maintain those programmes while it strives simultaneously to exercise the necessary budgetary restraints.

The ethnic and tribal conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and the reported acts of genocide and other atrocities are troubling and must exercise the minds and hearts of human beings everywhere. The international community cannot appear to condone such reprehensible acts, and appropriate measures must be taken to punish those responsible. Accordingly, Dominica unhesitatingly supports the establishment of international tribunals for the trial and punishment of those persons found guilty of crimes against humanity.

The Commonwealth of Dominica supports the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and as we look forward optimistically to a nuclear-free world we call upon all nations possessing weapons of mass destruction to join in a cooperative effort to reduce and finally to eliminate those weapons from the face of the Earth. We must also express concern at the apparent unwillingness of the international community to stem the increase in the rate of production of conventional arms of increasing sophistication and potential for destruction.

Acquired in many instances by third world nations, ostensibly to maintain secure borders and deter aggression, these weapons very often become effective instruments of internal repression and the cause of national and regional instability. Time after time the United Nations is called upon to expend its limited resources in repairing the damage and in alleviating the consequential suffering and misery. We are consistent in maintaining that a reordering of priorities is called for and that a slight shifting of resources away from the acquisition of unnecessary arsenals and into development programmes would result in tremendous social and economic benefits to the citizens of many developing countries.

In many countries human rights abuses occur on a daily basis. Dominica's respect for human rights and its commitment to ensure that the rights of every citizen are protected cannot be questioned. It is in keeping with that commitment that the Commonwealth of Dominica applauds the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and will support efforts to make that Office and the Centre for Human Rights effective instruments in the promotion and protection of human rights. We believe, however, that in the discharge of his responsibilities the task of the High Commissioner would be significantly strengthened if the United Nations General Assembly were to abandon its present selective condemnation of human rights abuses. Human rights abuses should be condemned wherever and whenever they occur and no nation should be permitted to take comfort from the fact that its violation of human rights covenants will escape the glare of publicity and the strictures of the international community.

The readmission of a democratic, non-racial South Africa to the United Nations on 23 June 1994 is a source of tremendous pleasure for my delegation and a tribute to the many persons and organizations, both inside and outside the United Nations, who worked so tirelessly in the long and hard struggle to put an end to the pernicious system of apartheid. The majority of the people of South Africa must be congratulated on their sustained effort and determination, as well as on their conciliatory attitude which augurs well for the new South Africa. Above all we must congratulate and applaud the President, Mr. Nelson Mandela, and his Second Deputy President, Mr. de Klerk, on the courage, considerable skill and political enlightenment which they jointly and effectively harnessed in reaching an accomplishment that may eventually be regarded as a model for the world. The journey has only just begun. Many difficulties lie ahead but there are reasons to be optimistic. With the assistance and support of the international community South Africa will succeed.

The progress that has been made in the bilateral negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbours in the Middle East is heart-warming indeed. With the first steps having been taken on the road to Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, and with the signing of the accord between Jordan and Israel, there appears to be an excellent opportunity for an eventual resolution of the conflict that has plagued that region for too long. Optimism must be tempered with caution, however. The implementation of the accords and full realization of Palestinian autonomy will depend for their success on generous financial support, both private and public. And while the United Nations must not be intrusive, its interest in seeing that the legitimate hopes, aspirations and security needs of the people of the area are realized imposes upon it a duty to continue to be seized with the subject-matter and to continue to monitor the process and the progress towards a full and just peace in the Middle East.

In different forums and at various times since September 1991, the Commonwealth of Dominica has consistently called for the ousting of the military regime in Port au Prince, the return of President Aristide to Haiti and the restoration of democracy and the rule of law to that country. For three years the military leaders in Haiti have authorized, encouraged and condoned brutal acts of revenge and wanton violence against the citizens of Haiti and have continued to exercise governmental power in defiance of world opinion. They temporized by entering into the Governors Island Agreement, which they later failed to honour. Their intransigence and unreliability led the Security Council to conclude that the unique character of the situation in Haiti required an exceptional response and that there was need for the use of all necessary means to facilitate the departure from Haiti of the military leaders and the prompt return of the legitimately elected President.

Faced with the prospect of having to confront an overwhelming multinational force, the military leaders have finally decided to step down, and while recent events give reason for pause, the prospect of the restoration of democracy to Haiti seems decidedly brighter than at any time in the last 36 months. When the Haitian people were the victims of officially sanctioned brutality and violence, we felt their pain. When President Aristide returns, we will rejoice with them. We wish the Haitian people well, and we will do

whatever we can to assist in their efforts to attain that measure of freedom that can come only from a government established on democratic principles. President Aristide is devoted to Haiti and the well-being of Haitians. We must support him and encourage him in this daunting and lonely task that he has undertaken for his people.

However, as friends of the Haitian people, we plead with them to understand that democracy cannot be imposed from outside; it can only develop from a genuine desire of the people of Haiti of all persuasions. A political environment of intense hatred and passionate desire for revenge is not fertile ground for a young and fragile democracy. Success in their new endeavour will require that nobility of spirit that seeks the path of reconciliation and trust and eschews vengeance and recriminations. No one can pretend that the task will be easy, but the following excerpt from a speech delivered by Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the commemoration of the Day of the African Child on 16 June 1994 might be instructive to the Haitian people. Speaking of his beloved South Africa, the venerable archbishop said:

> "The Minister of Justice of South Africa was detained several times. He suffers from a heart condition. The security forces tried to kill him by swapping his tablets. Today he is writing, drafting the legislation for an amnesty to forgive the security forces that wanted to kill him. If it can happen in a South Africa where it is said the problem is so intractable, no country in the world can ever again have an excuse for not being able to resolve its problem. God is saying, I set before you South Africa as a paradigm. This is how it can be done. There is hope for the world when South Africa can become as it has become."

We are in accord with Archbishop Tutu, and we are firmly of the view that if it can be done in South Africa it can and must be done in Haiti.

The exclusion of the Republic of China on Taiwan from membership in this body and from participation in the activities of its various agencies continues to be of concern to us. It appears incongruous to us that an industrial country of 21 million people with a democratic Government, with full membership in the Asian Development Bank, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, the Pacific Basin Economic Council and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, and with the capacity to make meaningful and worthwhile contributions to the activities of the United Nations is denied membership when everyone agrees that it exercises sovereign authority over a defined geographical area. On the principle of universality alone, the request of the Republic of China on Taiwan for membership in the United Nations is justifiable. We do not believe that the admission of the Republic of China on Taiwan precludes eventual unification. On the contrary, in our view it is likely to help the process along, and no one can pretend that parallel representation stands in the way. The citizens of the Republic of China on Taiwan deserve to be accorded those rights and privileges enjoyed by citizens of all sovereign States, and the commonwealth of Dominica advocates and supports the admission of the Republic of China on Taiwan to full membership in the United Nations.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We are gratified that the participants at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo have wisely arrived at a consensus that gives support to the view that, in the words of one commentator, "sustainable development cannot be realized without the full engagement and complete empowerment of women". That proposition has long been acknowledged and incorporated into our decision-making processes, to the extent that today women have equal access to education at all levels and gender equality manifests itself in all facets of life in Dominica. We realize that the plan of action requires increased spending on social programmes for its viability, and it is hoped that at the Conference in Copenhagen in 1995, participants from donor and recipient countries will arrive at a reasonable formula in that regard.

We support the establishment of the World Trade Organization and the liberalization of trade practices, but we need to remind the international community that fragile economies of small island states can be easily destroyed if free trade does not embody that measure of fairness necessary for their survival. We require that the larger and economically successful States be mindful of the need for poor small States to survive. The recent formation of the Association of Caribbean States will, we hope, provide a framework for increased trade among the States in the area and enhance the capability of the region in its search for ways to reach beneficial accommodation with more powerful trading groups in the hemisphere. We look forward to the forthcoming Summit of the Americas and the proposed frank and detailed examination of such issues as the hemispheric integration

process - including a hemispheric free trade zone - the role of multilateral financial institutions, sustainable development, and resource flows and debt in hemispheric development. We hope that out of that gathering will come not only a keener appreciation of the vulnerabilities of the smaller States in the region but also a greater impetus for collaboration on matters of regional trade and development.

After 49 years, its imperfections notwithstanding, the United Nations remains the world's greatest deliberative body and mankind's greatest hope for survival in a reasonably well-ordered and peaceful global community. As the United Nations prepares to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, we need to place on record our recognition of its many worthwhile accomplishments, and we hope that it will continue in its search for new and innovative ways to meet the challenges of the future.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica for the statement she has just made.

Dame Mary Eugenia Charles, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives, His Excellency, Mr. Fathula Jameel, on whom I now call.

Mr. Jameel (Maldives): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Mr. Amara Essy on his election to guide the work of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. His election to that important post is testimony to his personal credentials and to the important role played by Côte d'Ivoire in international affairs. I am confident that his wise guidance and leadership will enable this session of the General Assembly to deal successfully with the very important issues on its agenda.

I should also like to commend the work of his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who demonstrated outstanding diplomatic skills and dedication in so ably steering the work of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion.

Allow me also to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, for his untiring efforts in promoting international peace and security and justice.

The winds of change that are currently sweeping across the world give us, more then ever before, new hope in the promise of a better future, a future in which scarce resources will be utilized to feed the millions of hungry mouths and to provide basic health care, safe drinking water and a basic level of education to the needy rather than be again spent to build military might and to threaten the world with a new era of confrontation - a future which will provide a safe and clean environment in which human beings can live safely, in dignity, respect and hope.

The recently held World Conference on Human Rights, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the International Conference on Population and Development and the forthcoming World Conference on Women and World Summit for Social Development are clear testimony to that hope.

This was the dream of our founding fathers, and it is also ours. With the end of the cold war and on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, let us not hesitate to rededicate ourselves once again, with more vigour and more commitment, to the fulfilment of this dream.

The United Nations must be able to evolve and promote a stronger and more comprehensive system for preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. Let us not allow potentially dangerous situations to escalate into situations that leave the international community with no alternative but to take painful and expensive measures to enforce peace. Most important, the Organization must play a revitalized role as the principal broker and promoter of peace and justice in the world.

My delegation welcomes the present process of restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations. We are hopeful that the process of reform will take into consideration the concerns of all States to protect their security and maintain their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The establishment of effective measures of internal oversight of the United Nations system is one of the useful steps taken by the General Assembly. Special

attention must be given to all the issues involved in the choice and recruitment of personnel if we truly intend to improve the efficiency of the Organization, and we must emphasize quality rather than quantity so that the United Nations system may remain non-biased, less-politicized and vibrant.

For Maldives, the United Nations has always been and will always be the best hope for warding off challenges to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States. The Charter of the United Nations, which we remain firmly bound to honour, recognizes the inalienable right of every nation to exist within secure boundaries and of the people of every country to live in dignity and peace. It therefore falls to the world Organization to be the unequivocal guarantor of security and protection for those countries that lack the physical means to provide their own or that might simply be overrun by more powerful States.

Once again at this session the United Nations General Assembly will deliberate the agenda item on the protection and security of small States. My delegation hopes that important item will once again receive the same attention and support it was given at the forty-fourth and forty-sixth sessions.

My delegation draws inspiration from the unwavering and renewed resolve of the international community with regard to important security and political issues, which was significantly demonstrated in the Gulf crisis, among others. The inherent vulnerability of small States was never more clearly demonstrated than it was in the case of the international intervention in Kuwait in 1990. Who, indeed, could have imagined that a fully sovereign State Member of the United Nations, economically strong and with powerful friends, would find itself at risk of being wiped off the world political map - and if a country like Kuwait can be forced into such a precarious position, where is the security of far smaller and economically weaker States?

The recent instances in which the United Nations took firm and decisive action certainly highlight the importance and effectiveness of the collective-security system envisaged in the Charter. In addition, they brought home to the international community the fact that a rapid-response system needs to be constantly in place if international peace and security are to be maintained. The Security Council Summit Meeting in January 1992 reaffirmed that body's commitment to collective security as a valid principle in the maintenance of international peace and security. My delegation believes that this is the time to give urgent and deeper consideration to the overall question of collective security. This is easily said, but the subject includes the question of improving the skill and ability to exercise foresight and act with dispatch, as well as of building up the capacity and capability to move with greater coordination.

True success in accomplishing this challenging task facing the international community will require sincere commitment and dedication. This can be achieved only if every Member of the Organization exercises the political will to settle all disputes peacefully, without discrimination, and to assist the United Nations to move forward in that direction. The recommendations set forth in the Secretary-General's report, "An Agenda for Peace", on preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building, can serve as an extremely effective tool to achieve this end.

My delegation sincerely feels that as we study together every possible means of strengthening the structure of the United Nations to make it more effective and responsive to a changing world the security of small States must be given its rightful place when priorities are reviewed and special consideration given the task of preserving international peace, security and stability.

One of the most encouraging events in world history has been the classic manner in which the Republic of South Africa, under the leadership of President Nelson Mandela, has not only eliminated the policy of apartheid, that most inhuman form of racial discrimination, but also established democracy with full respect for all the norms of national reconciliation. It is therefore with sincere sentiments of congratulation and good wishes that my delegation welcomes the restoration of the Republic of South Africa to its rightful place in the family of nations and this Organization.

I view the positive developments in the Middle East as a most valuable lesson on how sincere, determined and dedicated efforts based on peace and conciliation can yield rich dividends in dangerously volatile situations.

I sincerely feel that the international community owes a debt of gratitude to the Governments of the United States of America and other States concerned for their most valuable contributions to the creation of the necessary atmosphere for the ongoing peace negotiations in the Middle East, in which I fervently hope and pray the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine will be restored. I am convinced that the present trend of events, if pursued with patience and in good faith by all

the parties involved, will result in the establishment of a sovereign, independent State of Palestine, the settlement of the issues related to the occupied Territories and finally the attainment by that region of a comprehensive and lasting peace based on the principles of justice and equality.

Time and again Maldives has stressed the importance of continuing accelerated efforts to attain the United Nations goal of completing the disarmament process. My delegation firmly believes that success in preserving and maintaining international peace, security and stability will depend on progress in the field of disarmament. Admittedly, there have been significant achievements in this area. However, the production, stockpiling and sale of weapons of war continue on an alarming scale throughout the world.

Although there is a convergence of views regarding the dangers of nuclear arms, some countries seem to desire to acquire or retain nuclear-weapons technology. We believe that so long as this trend continues unabated it will indeed be difficult to improve the climate of security and to pave the way for a safer world for generations to come.

One of the key disarmament issues confronting the international community is the question of a decision on extending the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We remain convinced that its unconditional and indefinite extension should be one of the cornerstones for building a world free of all nuclear weapons. But this requires that all the countries possessing nuclear weapons and nuclear-weapons technology take a responsible stand, something that can come about only through a sincere desire to establish a genuine international non-nuclear regime. In our opinion, the apparent reluctance of some countries to comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system is not encouraging. We therefore urge all those countries to join the international community in the persistent effort to establish a safer world.

My delegation also supports the concept of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace throughout the world. We feel that the failure to promote this concept in all regions of the world is a clear indication of the doubt and suspicion that still prevail in the international community. Unless we can overcome these uncertainties the chances of achieving global disarmament will indeed be bleak.

As we begin yet another session of discussions, consultations and debates on ways and means of uniting our efforts and resources to make the world a safer place for mankind and to alleviate the terrible human suffering in many countries, we should, I firmly believe, pause to assess the tremendous responsibility we carry. As representatives of individual countries, we have to consider our national interests; united, we have an unshakable commitment to giving undaunted and unwavering support to the process of making the United Nations as effective as is humanly possible, to prevent the evolution of such tragic, dangerous and explosive situations as those in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The question of Bosnia and Herzegovina has yet to be resolved. We condemn the continuing violence and genocide there, and call upon the international community to take more decisive steps to implement the Security Council's resolutions in order to discharge fully the responsibilities entrusted to us by the Charter and restore the sovereignty and independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Let us not tolerate in our time any act of genocide based on ethnic hatred or prejudice.

Similarly, my delegation is deeply concerned about the tragic situations continuing in Angola, Somalia and Rwanda despite the fact that the United Nations is still providing humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of their peoples. While commending the efforts of the international community to help these countries, which are being torn apart by civil strife, we feel that the assistance should not be limited to meeting humanitarian needs, but should extend beyond that to restoring peace and stability in those countries, giving them another chance to rebuild their national economies.

As I observe the world economic situation I cannot but feel considerable dismay at the fact that, despite the recent conclusion of the seven-year Uruguay Round of negotiations, the developing countries have not been provided with much impetus to maintain economic growth in the face of the increasing gap between themselves and the developed countries and of persistent protectionism in trade.

The situation adversely affects the least-developed countries most as they lack the resources to overcome the odds stacked against them. I feel that further intensification of South-South cooperation has become more necessary, in order to harness their resources for purposes of assisting the less developed of the developing countries and encouraging developmental efforts on the basis of collective self-reliance. The United Nations and

the international developmental and financial institutions should encourage and support this process.

At the same time, the North-South dialogue must not be allowed to be marginalized, since it is essential for the growth of a world economy on a firm foundation of partnership to promote common interests and benefits. Without this basic element, the chances of promoting a stable world economy indeed seem bleak.

After decades of protracted studies, research, discussions and debates, and then the resulting experience, we are today in a position to appreciate fully that development is not simple. It can be achieved only through a process that encompasses numerous attributes of human life; education, health, the environment, peace, the economy, society and culture and national and international behaviour all contribute to its achievement.

The reviews and expert opinions gathered on the Agenda for Development, together with the recent sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, indicate that intergovernmental cooperation involving the various agencies of the United Nations, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations must contribute to laying the groundwork for development. I do not foresee any easy or quick means of achieving development goals. While further detailed consideration is given to this multifaceted, all-important question, I should like to add my voice on the need to bear in mind the great diversity in the levels of progress that Member countries have been able to achieve, and the wide variation in the extent of resources that they can invest in this venture, which is an inherent right of every nation.

As the representative of a small island State, I pay tribute to all those responsible for the planning and organization of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which was held in Barbados this year. I believe that appropriate recognition has now been given to the special environmental and economic circumstances of small island States in the context of achieving sustainable development. One of the most important outcomes of this Conference was a re-emphasis on the dire need of small island developing States for the development of human resources. But assessment of the need is only a prelude to the implementation of any programme of action. What is required is sustained effort by the developing States and technical and other input by the developed countries and international organizations. In view of the Programme of Action and Declaration emanating from the Barbados Conference, as well as Agenda 21, I need hardly emphasize the urgent need to stimulate positive responses by the international community with regard to assisting the island developing States to improve the socio-economic standards of their peoples in order to embark on plans for sustainable development.

At the same time, we are concerned at the speed at which international conferences are being held and ambitious programmes of action being drawn up without sufficient resources to implement them. I make this statement because of the experience we have had following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992. The expectations which followed that conference have started to recede because of insufficient resources available to implement the programme of action. One of the most outstanding results of the Conference was the creation of greater awareness of the environmental problems that the international community faces. At the same time, it is tragic to note that greater awareness of the predicament on the part of those countries most susceptible to environmental damage only helps to increase apprehensions of disaster and frustration.

As an island developing country, Maldives appreciates the tremendous achievement of the international community in establishing the rule of law on the vast stretches of the high seas, which cover two thirds of the surface of the Earth. The fact that it took 12 long years after its adoption for the Convention on the Law of the Sea to enter into force is indeed a development that will be written in letters of gold in the annals of world history.

The question of human rights should occupy a central place in our minds when we deal with all issues of global concern. The establishment of the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is certainly a most welcome step. But this step can have meaningful results only if the necessary resources are provided for the High Commissioner to carry out his mandate fairly and objectively, without any further financial burdens on the membership of this Organization.

I would also like to emphasize here that, while the Universal Declaration of 1948 may be the universal guide for future work in this area, we must not attempt to lay down rigidly uniform standards of human conduct and behaviour for all societies without due respect for and regard to the diverse cultures and religions prevailing in

the world. For it is the full understanding of this diversity that reinforces the fabric of what we call international relations and the unity of the membership of this Organization.

The United Nations is being burdened with more and more onerous responsibilities not only for the preservation and maintenance of international peace, security and stability, but for also assisting mankind in the realization of the goals of a safer world and a higher standard of living for the generations to come.

I remain convinced that if this universal Organization is to be successful in meeting the numerous challenges before it, every one of its Members must extend unstinting financial, technological, military and manpower-resource support to the Organization.

We cannot afford to be complacent, nor can we condone any attempts to deflect the work of the United Nations to any path other than that of right, justice and equality, as enshrined in the Charter.

For my part, I can only reiterate the sincere commitment of the Government of the Republic of Maldives to supporting the United Nations and the principles of the Charter to the best of our ability. Only by so doing is there any hope of avoiding disastrous consequences. What is more, the Government of the Republic of Maldives implicitly trusts the United Nations as the guarantor of its security and as its protector.

Mr. Pálsson (Iceland): May I congratulate Foreign Minister Essy of Côte d'Ivoire on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that he will steer our work to a successful conclusion, and I pledge him the full support of my delegation.

I wish also to take this opportunity to express my Government's satisfaction that South Africa, which now takes its place as a full and respected member of the community of nations, has been reinstated in the General Assembly.

It is a much-vaunted truth that the end of the cold war has released the United Nations from the bondage of a world obsessed with military security. But there is another change at work - perhaps less abrupt but equally epoch-making - in the international system which has far-reaching implications for our world Organization. I refer to the progressive intertwining of the destinies of the different peoples of the world, the globalization of the world economy, the communications revolution and the increasingly transnational nature of the issues of human survival, be they environmental problems, poverty, refugees or population pressures, and the eroding capacity of the nation-State to address them single-handedly.

Global interdependence is causing greater demands to be made on the United Nations than at any previous time. The will to cooperate is gradually replacing the spirit of confrontation throughout the world. At the same time, it is not clear that we have created an organization equal to the task of meeting the host of new demands. Though adept at analysing their sources, we are still inclined to deal with conflicts only after they arise instead of preventing them. The dangers we face may be novel, but the structures we draw on to cope with them derive from a world that has largely vanished from view. Last but not least, we saddle the United Nations with new responsibilities without providing adequate resources to tackle them. In this way, a discrepancy has come about between our expectations of the United Nations and the ability to deliver on them.

While our main challenge should be to seek to transform the United Nations into a more effective instrument for dealing with issues that truly are beyond the compass of the nation-State, we should also bear in mind that the United Nations was not designed to be a substitute for national Governments. Wherever possible the United Nations should work with its Member States in areas where they are competent and draw to the maximum extent possible on regional organizations. In so doing, we reduce the burden on the United Nations and facilitate the setting of priorities.

Looked at in this perspective, a number of developments over the past 12 months give the United Nations reason for encouragement. Democracy and the principles of the free market are making new inroads, and the protection of human rights is gaining momentum in many parts of the world. In Eastern Europe the process of democratic change is now irreversible. The negotiated withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic States has removed from the European continent one of the last vestiges of the cold war. In Northern Ireland there is for the first time since early this century a realistic chance of lasting peace and stability. In the Middle East the breakthrough achieved last year has been consolidated with the Gaza-Jericho Agreement and a peace accord between Israel and Jordan, hopefully paving

the way for a comprehensive peace settlement in the entire region.

In South Africa, the spirit of dialogue has finally triumphed over the forces of hatred and racism, offering a model of tolerance for other countries on the troubled African continent. In Western Sahara, there are brightening prospects, provided that all the relevant parties do their part in creating the necessary climate of confidence to enable the people of Western Sahara to decide their own destiny in a democratic election.

But there have also been setbacks. Gross violations of human rights have continued in places as far apart as Haiti and East Timor. The tragic injustice in the former Yugoslavia, the chaos in Somalia, as well as the terrible carnage inflicted on the people of Rwanda by their own compatriots, demonstrate the intractable nature of many of the conflicts that our Organization is being called upon to deal with. Unlike the inter-State conflicts which traditionally have preoccupied the United Nations, these are conflicts taking place within the confines of the nation-State, where legitimate authority has either collapsed or been emaciated by civil strife. As the Organization adapts itself to the new demands of the post-cold-war era, ways must be found to address such internal crises in full conformity with the United Nations Charter.

To heed this call, greater attention must now be concentrated on the preventive dimension. Much effort has in recent years been devoted to peace-keeping, which now extends to non-military operations, including electoral assistance, the provision of humanitarian relief and human rights monitoring. This is as it should be, and countries contributing substantially to such peace-keeping operations certainly deserve both our gratitude and respect. At the same time, we must make sure that the necessary resources are also allocated to development.

One of the lessons we have learned in recent years is that we must focus more intently on the link between peace and development. Increasingly, we have come to understand that peace and security require solutions to social and economic problems, that without development there can be no peace. In this connection, I wish to pay special tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whose agenda for development, submitted two years after his pathbreaking Agenda for Peace, has sharpened our awareness of the need for creating an infrastructure of peace.

For there to be a stable and lasting infrastructure of peace, a number of elements must be in place: a commitment to democracy and respect for human rights, a sound social fabric, a growing economy and a sustainable natural environment.

As a representative of one of the world's oldest democracies — one which celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of its second republic this year — I cannot be accused of underrating the redeeming virtues of democracy, which, as was pointed out earlier in this debate, fosters the greatest force behind social and economic progress: individual creativity. Democracies, as a rule, also tend to honour human rights. By promoting tolerance and respect for the dignity of the individual, we contribute to preventing cultural, ethnic and territorial conflicts. For good reason, human rights are therefore increasingly being considered as an integral part of the notion of extended security. It is thus to be regretted that the efforts of the United Nations in this important field continue to be strained due to lack of financial resources.

The effective implementation and monitoring of human rights standards, not least with respect to vulnerable groups, should be a matter of priority for the United Nations. The plight of children in some parts of the world gives cause for grave concern. Four years ago, the largest gathering of world political leaders assembled here in this Hall of the General Assembly and endorsed the principle that children should have the first call on the resources of society essential to their survival, protection and development. Next year we will assess how far we have come in honouring the commitments undertaken by the Summit for Children. At the same time we will be celebrating the half-centenary of the United Nations. In the view of my Government, this milestone event should be used to give new impetus to efforts to ensure that children are given the best social conditions the world community can offer.

As it happens, the fiftieth anniversary celebrations will coincide with the Beijing Conference on the status of women. The timing is significant as the goals of achieving equality, empowerment and security for women are key to the social agenda of the United Nations as it makes the transition into its second half-century. Improving the status of women is of paramount importance for the well-being of the family, and has positive multiplier effects on overall levels of education health and population growth in society as a whole.

Conversely, where society has broken down or social safety-nets are inadequate, women assume the largest burden. There is therefore a direct link between the Fourth World Conference on Women, the recent International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo and the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen next spring. The Copenhagen summit will afford us a much needed opportunity to focus attention on the social ills that compromise the ability of nations to develop their full potential, be they poverty or disease, homelessness or hunger, joblessness or social exclusion, crime or violence. Fifty years after the United Nations avowed in its Charter to promote social progress and better standards of living in greater freedom, the time has come to put sustainable human development at the top of the Organization's agenda.

In relieving the plight of the most underprivileged segments of the world's population, the role of economic growth can hardly be overstated. The abolition of trade barriers is the single most important factor for world economic growth. Just as a rising tide lifts the boats, so an increase in world trade will create new jobs and raise incomes around the world. My Government therefore strongly welcomes the establishment of the World Trade Organization and urges other signatory States to ratify the Uruguay-Round Agreement without undue delay.

Focusing on economic progress must not, however, blind us to the need to keep an eye on other areas, which, if neglected, might strip us of the harvest of increased prosperity. One such area is the environment. Over the past few years the United Nations has made significant headway in its efforts to promote sustainable development worldwide. The results of the Rio Conference on Environment and development provide a sound basis for further work. As we now assume the momentous task of development, measures must also be taken to protect the environment from detrimental patterns of production and consumption.

While recognizing the need to take a balanced view of the ecosystem as a whole, Iceland remains particularly concerned over the deteriorating condition of the world's oceans. It is a hopeful sign that the international community has shown increasing awareness of the importance of the sustainable utilization of the living resources of the sea. It has been estimated that the poorest two-thirds of the world's population get about 40 percent of their protein from fish, and that food production must more than double just to keep pace with the growth in demand in the decades ahead. To meet this growth, it will be necessary to rely not only on agriculture but also - and to an increasing extent - on the sustainable utilization of the living resources of the sea.

Such considerations notwithstanding, the ecosystem of the sea is now in greater danger than ever before from pollution and overfishing. Protecting the oceans against the repercussions of economic and industrial expansion will pose a major challenge to the international community in the years ahead. Although much has been accomplished, existing conventions aimed at containing the pollution of the marine environment cover only a part of the problem, as no global scheme addressing pollution from land-based activities is in place. For this reason, Iceland attaches great importance to the Conference on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, to be convened in Washington next year under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme. We urge all States and relevant international agencies to participate actively in the preparatory process, commencing officially in Reykjavik in March next year.

The responsible use of fisheries resources is, however, no less important than combatting the threat of marine pollution. The universal acceptance of the sovereignty of the coastal State over its adjacent waters was a necessary precondition of the effective management by the world community of the living resources of the sea. The application of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which extended the rule of law to over two thirds of the Earth's surface, has contributed more than any single undertaking to the furtherance of that goal. Against this background, Iceland particularly welcomes the fact that this Convention, a crowning achievement in the progressive development of international law under the auspices of the United Nations, will come into force in only a few weeks' time.

My country remains strongly committed to the establishment of an international regime governing all aspects of the utilization of living marine resources, including the high seas. For this reason, Iceland has actively supported the drafting of a legally binding and comprehensive instrument that would ensure the effective management and conservation of fisheries outside the economic zone of the coastal State. In Iceland's view, this goal could best be achieved by establishing regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements open to States with legitimate interests in the relevant fisheries. Such provisions should not, however, be understood as

implying approval of existing forms of cooperation based, in some instances, on unilateral decisions by a few States aimed at excluding other neighbouring States, notwithstanding the latter's overwhelming dependence on and proximity to the fisheries in question. Indeed, unjustified discrimination would defeat the very aim of establishing a new high seas fisheries regime for the benefit of all nations.

The global challenge of development calls for bold new thinking, backed by the solid commitment of the international community to the goals enshrined in the United Nations Charter. It also demands that we try to establish consensus on the restructuring and reform of our Organization in the near future. Efforts must be made to improve the representational capacity and efficiency of the Security Council and at the same time preserve the constitutional balance between the various organs of the Organization, not least between the Council and the General Assembly.

We find ourselves on the threshold of a new era. Yet, we are far from having rid ourselves completely of the legacy of the cold war, which includes immense quantities of armaments and the technology for producing them. It would certainly be disastrous if the recent transformation of the international security environment were to be undermined by the growing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In this connection, my Government deems it of the utmost importance that the Convention on chemical weapons enter into force next year and that the Convention on Biological Weapons be further reinforced. In addition, the indefinite and unconditional extension of the non-proliferation Treaty would be the single most significant measure against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This should be followed up by universal adherence to the nuclear-test moratorium and the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

As we inaugurate the second half-century of the United Nations, what better gift could the community of nations bestow on itself? And in what better way could we make a clean break with the cold war era?

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): It is a special pleasure for me to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Amara Essy, Foreign Minister of Côte d'Ivoire, on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are confident that under his able leadership the deliberations of this session will come to a fruitful conclusion. My delegation extends its full support to him in carrying out his important duties.

I should also like to express my delegation's appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Samuel R. Insanally, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Guyana to the United Nations, for successfully presiding over the General Assembly during its forty-eighth session. I also take this opportunity to express my admiration to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the dedication, commitment and insight with which he has been serving the United Nations.

Since the end of the cold war the world community has faced many developments, both encouraging and disturbing. As a Vice-Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid — now dissolved — Nepal feels particularly happy about the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa. As President Mandela said in his speech earlier in this session, it was one of the ironies of our age that it was only so late in the twentieth century that such a regime came to an end. The United Nations role in the establishment of a united democratic and non-racist South Africa has been gratifying to all of us. The end of apartheid represents progress on the part of mankind in its history of civilization. The statesmanship of President Mandela can be a source of inspiration for those who are in search of freedom, peace and justice elsewhere in the world.

Nepal also welcomes the progress in the Middle East peace process and looks forward to the establishment of comprehensive peace in the region. We hope that such achievements will inspire peoples in conflict with each other elsewhere to end their hostilities, and to start similar peace processes.

There are also disturbing areas of conflict. The Nepalese people are grieved at the enormous loss of life and the extensive material devastation in Rwanda. It is our hope that with the active support of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in conflict resolution, the United Nations peace-keeping efforts will facilitate the process of restoring normalcy and a peaceful civil society in Rwanda.

Nepal also appreciates the role played by the OAU in Burundi in terms of conflict prevention, management and resolution. We hope that the OAU mechanism will be applied effectively to other troubled parts of the region

such as Somalia, Angola and Liberia, in order to restore normalcy.

Nepal is also deeply distressed by the tragedy which, despite the Security Council's resolutions, continues unabated in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would like to urge all the parties concerned to seek peace through dialogue and negotiation rather than through violence. Nepal also looks forward to an early restoration of the democratically elected Government in Haiti, which alone can ensure full respect for human rights in that country.

We are meeting on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, which will be a time for us to reflect on the past five decades and plan for the next 50 years. Born as a result of the Second World War, the United Nations has over the past five decades ceaselessly deployed efforts to prevent a third world war. Disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, has therefore been one of its major concerns. The United Nations also made constant efforts to bring peace to the Middle East and to put an end to apartheid in South Africa, and it remained engaged in many other areas of conflict. However, the last five decades, characterized by the cold war, almost paralysed the United Nations.

The East-West divide seriously hampered the United Nations efforts in most conflict situations. A number of important agreements were reached and many peace negotiations were held outside the United Nations. Nevertheless, those achievements were in conformity with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, and the United Nations provided an important global forum for discussion, which helped defuse major global catastrophes. Thus, in the ultimate analysis, the United Nations has undoubtedly made significant contributions to international relations. Moreover, the United Nations and its specialized agencies and other related bodies, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and many others, have been engaged in improving social and economic conditions around the world.

Since the cold war, whose enormous cost adversely affected the lives of billions of people, is now over, we at the United Nations, standing — as it were — at the crossroads of history, can now define the Organization's role and work for the next 50 years.

With such rapid changes taking place in international relations, particularly in recent years, the United Nations needs to be restructured and revitalized. The restructuring of the Security Council has assumed a particular urgency. Nepal strongly supports an increase in the membership of the Council to reflect, not only the increase in the general membership of the United Nations, but also the reality of the present world. A review of the Council's membership has also to take into account the contributions of Member States to the maintenance of international peace and security. We attach a high priority to greater transparency and openness in the Council's work, and also attach great importance to the principle of equitable representation, which would give all United Nations Members — large or small, rich or poor, powerful or weak — a reasonable opportunity to contribute to the work of the Council.

We hope that the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Security Council and related issues will be fruitful in due time. Our delegation considers that the reform and expansion of the Security Council should also include measures geared to reforming its working methods and procedures. In addition, there is a need to enhance the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The changed context of international relations and the United Nations preoccupation with peace-keeping operations should not be allowed to deflect attention from efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Rather, the propitious climate now prevailing calls for strengthening the role of the United Nations in arms control and disarmament. In this context, I wish to recall the unanimous political support expressed by the General Assembly at its last session for the decision of the Conference on Disarmament to give to its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a mandate to negotiate such a ban. To this end, the Non-Aligned Movement, of which Nepal is a founding member, has called for a special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament in order to undertake a comprehensive assessment of progress towards global disarmament.

Like the rest of the international community, Nepal looks forward to the early conclusion of a comprehensive treaty prohibiting nuclear tests in all atmospheres. A non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable test-ban treaty would have a positive impact on the success of the Conference on the review and extension of the Treaty on

the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is due to be held in 1995.

In addition to pursuing confidence-building measures, the United Nations role in arms control and disarmament needs to be effectively strengthened. In this context, the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament can play an important role, as they provide much-needed forums for the exchange of views. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific has already held several meetings to promote such a process of dialogue and interaction.

Nepal is firm in its conviction that peace-keeping operations, though extremely important, especially in this post-cold-war period, are no substitute for the peaceful resolution of conflicts through political dialogue and mediation. Application of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in the restoration and maintenance of international peace and security should be invoked by the Security Council only as a last resort, fully respecting the principles of impartiality and non-selectivity. Nepal has supported fully the Secretary-General's initiative in expanding preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution. We have consistently committed our troops to the peace-keeping operations undertaken by the United Nations through the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Protection Force.

Besides serving in Cambodia during the critical stage of democratic elections there, Nepal has also sent civilian police monitors for electoral assistance in Mozambique. Nepal has also sent troops to Somalia, despite the heavy loss of life and casualties suffered by our young men. We would like to pay tribute to those Nepalese soldiers and to the others who gave their lives in the relentless pursuit of international peace and security. Prime Minister Giri ja Prasad Koirala, in a recent statement to the roundtable on United Nations peace-keeping operations in Kathmandu, stated:

> "While the Government (of Nepal) has raised its voice at the United Nations and in appropriate international forums for more effective mechanisms for the safety and protection of our personnel, the Government reaffirms its commitment to continue to participate in such operations with a sense of responsibility and solemn obligation."

Since peace-keeping operations have become more complicated and more expensive in recent years, there is greater urgency to make those operations cost-effective and efficient. Peace-keeping contributions must be paid in full and on time so that the troop — contributing countries may be in a better position to maintain the most critical element in peace-keeping operations — the troops. My Government holds the firm view that the death and disability compensation to all troops should he based on equity. We hope to review the current guidelines on this matter in order to arrive at a standard compensation package applicable to all.

Every peace-keeping operation should be devised with a clear mandate, a realistic time frame and a correct assessment of the situation. Furthermore, we would like to reiterate that timely consultations with troop-contributing countries are essential elements for the enhancement of the peace-keeping capability of the United Nations. Nepal welcomes the Secretary-General's initiative on stand-by arrangements for peace-keeping. We are studying the proposal seriously, especially in view of current events that highlight the need for the establishment of such an arrangement.

Since the threat to security lies, *inter alia*, in non-military sources such as the lack of economic and social development, Nepal stresses the need for timely implementation of Agenda 21 for ensuring the sustainability of the planet for present and future generations. The Commission on Sustainable Development has made a good start. It must not be allowed to falter or to be turned into a discussion forum only. The Commission should build a bridge between the North and the South to enable the developing countries to follow the path of sustainable development. By providing additional financial resources and transferring environmentally sound technology to developing countries, the international community can surely reach the goals set in Agenda 21. In our view, the level of consumption and wastage in most industrialized countries also needs to be moderated if we are to achieve the goals of sustainable development.

The success of population and socio-economic development programmes hinges on the full empowerment of women. The focus given to the empowerment of women in decision-making, especially in planning the size of a family, at the recent International Conference on Population and Development is a mater of satisfaction to my delegation. However, the success of the Plan of Action as adopted requires increased financial resources. The developing countries, despite their severe resource constraints, have been

committing significant amounts in population activities at the cost of other important areas that are required for economic growth and development.

That important conference will be followed by the World Summit for Social Development, the fourth World Conference on Women and the 1996 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). This year alone, we have participated in many important conferences: on natural disaster reduction, on the sustainable development of small island States, on combating desertification and drought, and on population and development. A question remains outstanding: that of the availability of the critical resources for the successful implementation of the recommendations of these conferences. The developing countries find themselves in an exasperating situation, trying to cope with their responsibilities, as outlined in previous agreements and resolutions, without the necessary actions from the industrialized countries.

Nepal fully shares the Secretary-General's view that an alternative to the United Nations in the field of development simply does not exist, especially in the light of the new vision of development as inextricably linked with peace and security. We reiterate our view that there must be close cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. The main objectives of the proposed agenda for development should be directed towards ensuring successful implementation of existing programmes for the alleviation of poverty. The agenda should be an instrument that looks after the most vulnerable and the weakest nations of the world.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the signing of the agreements at Marrakesh undoubtedly constitute a historic breakthrough in the international trade regime. The window of opportunity is now open for many developing countries to enhance their trade and development. Once again, the least developed countries will be left out, in spite of this tremendous opportunity now available to many. The lack of basic physical infrastructure and the absence of a manufacturing base will prevent the least developed countries from taking advantage of this new opportunity. The least developed countries, including my own country, have suffered for decades. These handicaps, however, have not deterred us from our determination to cooperate fully with the international community by instituting structural adjustment programmes and economic liberalization policies, including privatization

Structural adjustment programmes lacking due consideration for social safety nets have pushed a large sector of the world's population towards more misery and discontent. Economic liberalization programmes without adequate institutional and organizational set-ups have not yielded the desired results in many countries. The major purpose of the privatization programmes undertaken by many developing countries — the efficient and productive use of resources — has yet to be fulfilled. At the same time, it may be appreciated that these inadequate measures, resulting in higher inflation, a distorted market system and increasing unemployment, may result in greater social tension.

We are happy to note that in the context of the follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action, an open-ended Working Group of the Third Committee has been established; we hope it will review the mandates of existing human rights machinery, taking into account the balanced emphasis between civil, political, cultural, economic and social rights, as well as improving human rights on the basis of the principles of impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity.

Violation or suppression of human rights within a nation's boundary have consequences outside its boundaries as well. People unable to live in conditions where human rights are suppressed are forced to flee their own homelands and take refuge elsewhere. United Nations agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme, and international and non-governmental humanitarian organizations, are well aware of this. My delegation would like to commend the work of these United Nations agencies. We also feel that the agencies must be mandated to serve all the people in such difficult situations.

The Constitution of Nepal enshrines the principle of universal human rights. We believe that the right to development is an integral part of human rights. Nepal is now party to 14 international human rights instruments, including all the major Conventions and Covenants. A national action plan on human rights is being prepared in line with the final document of the Vienna Conference on Human Rights.

Nepal is also consolidating the multi-party democratic system that was restored by the people through a popular movement in 1990. Nepal participated actively in the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, at Managua, Nicaragua, in

July this year. The Conference provided us with an opportunity to share each other's experience of nascent democracy. In November this year the peopie of Nepal are participating in our second general elections on the basis of adult franchise. We are confident that this exercise in democracy will give an impetus to the long-term economic development of our country.

The Charter of the United Nations captures the highest ideals of mankind. However, much remains to be done to put those ideals into practice. We look forward to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations as the occasion to work for instituting dynamism and efficiency in the United Nations. My delegation is fully confident that our vision of the United Nations as a symbol of peace, security, human rights and development will be realized if Member States demonstrate the political will and provide the necessary financial and material support to the Organization.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.25

General Assembly

Official Records

Forty-ninth Session

25th Meeting
Monday, 10 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The first speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, His Excellency the Honourable Alpian Allen. I now call on him.

Mr. Allen (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): As we prepare to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, the memory of the cold war is fading rapidly from our minds. We recall the nostalgia with which we heralded the end of the era and the concomitant universal aspirations to a world of peace and prosperity.

The world has witnessed the triumph of democracy in several areas and the resolution of conflicts that had originated in a war maintained by the earlier East-West confrontation. However, the images of violence, famine and destruction that flicker daily on our television screens suggest some urgency for the world community to attempt to put an end to the violence and the senseless destruction of human lives.

It is against this backdrop, Sir, that we welcome someone with your wide diplomatic experience and wisdom as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that you will make an important contribution to the further success of our deliberations on the vital and major issues of our time.

Your predecessor, our Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and West Indian brother Ambassador Samuel R. Insanally, has established a superb record of achievements, on which I would like to congratulate him warmly.

At this juncture in the history of the United Nations, our Organization is fortunate to have a Secretary-General like Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a person eminently suited by training and disposition to guide the membership of this body towards a new era of peace and prosperity that we hope will emerge from the debris o the cold war.

My delegation takes this opportunity to welcome the new South Africa into our midst as an equal Member of the Organization, ready to participate in all its activities in accordance with the purposes and the principles of the United Nations Charter. We now join the courageous people of South Africa as they celebrate with happiness and pride their victory over the struggle of the century: the fight against apartheid. At long last they have rid themselves of the shackles of that abominable crime and have finally removed the greatest blemish from the continent of Africa. We congratulate Mr. Nelson Mandela and salute his determined march from prison to President. He symbolizes the aspirations of the South African people and the values of non-racialism, democracy and peace. Indeed, this is a lesson in perseverance and faith in the human spirit.

94-86600 (E)

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The voice of the international community was clearly heard as it worked to mobilize public opinion against the injustice of apartheid, and we are now greatly relieved that the question of its elimination will finally be removed from the agenda of succeeding session of the General Assembly.

My delegation hailed the historic Agreement on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which was signed on 13 September 1993 in Washington, D.C. We also welcomed the historic breakthrough that gave impetus to an overall Arab-Israeli settlement when Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein met in Washington last July and laid the foundation for the establishment of a peace treaty between the two countries. The international community must also be heartened by the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Morocco and by an apparent thaw in relations between Israel and Syria. We are all looking forward with great anticipation to the commencement of negotiations between the two Governments. It is our hope that these initiatives signal the beginning of the end of one of the longest standing and most intractable conflicts of our time and that they herald an era of peace, security and political stability in the Middle East.

The recent peace overtures in the Middle East are yet another demonstration of the dramatic changes in international relations that have taken place since the collapse of communism and the end of the cold war. In this context my Government is optimistic that the still-unresolved major international political issues will be similarly settled. I refer in particular to the problem of North and South Korea and that of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China in Taiwan.

It is the view of the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines that the time has come when serious consideration should be given the eligibility of the Republic of China in Taiwan to become a Member of the United Nations. That is why my Government, in association with other like-minded countries, requested the Secretary-General to include an item on the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly entitled "Consideration of the exceptional situation of the Republic of China in Taiwan in the international context, based on the principle of universality and in accordance with the established model of parallel representation of divided countries at the United Nations." We trust that this item will soon secure a place on the agenda of the General Assembly and that when it does every Member State of this noble institution will give its full support to this initiative. We cannot preach about the universality of the United Nations while at the same time we ignore the aspirations of over 20 million people in the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Certain present-day international political trends, as I mentioned earlier, give us renewed encouragement and hope of relations being conducted between and within States in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. This, however, does not mean that the world is now free from tension and international disputes.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a persistent crisis which continues to shock us all. Efforts made to date by the international community to halt the aggression by Serbia and Montenegro and to settle the crisis by peaceful means have been in vain. The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines regrets that the recent proposals for a political settlement of the conflict have been rejected by the Bosnian Serbs. That rejection carries with it the danger of the continuation and even grave escalation of the conflict. We urge the Bosnian Serbs to accept the proposals of the Contact Group and to resolve their remaining differences in the spirit of peaceful negotiation and reconciliation, thus taking irreversible steps towards a just and durable peace in Bosnia.

As a country blessed with freedom and the absence of racial and religious bigotry, we will always raise our voice against any form of "ethnic cleansing". We also look forward to the reunification of Cyprus and to the departure of foreign occupation troops from all countries.

The vicious cycle of starvation, violence, the breakdown of central authority, and endless conflicts continues to bedevil in varying ways the situation in Somalia, Zaire, Angola, Liberia, Mozambique, Burundi and Rwanda. We call upon the United Nations to continue its struggle to establish peace in these areas.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines places a high value on its relations with the Americas since we are part of the same hemisphere. We share the same burning desire for meaningful economic, political and social development. Over the past decade there has been a noticeable and commendable trend towards democratic rule.

The Convention establishing the Association of Caribbean States, which was signed at Cartagena on 24 July 1994, represents an achievement in the areas of

economic cooperation and regional integration, with the ultimate objective of launching new opportunities for the pursuit of collective initiatives by 40 Latin American and Caribbean States, comprising some 200 million people and united by the waters of the Caribbean. The further strengthening of the inter-American system remains a major objective of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

My delegation is very pleased that the use of force was averted in Haiti and that, at long last, democracy and constitutional legitimacy will be returned to that land. We are equally delighted to learn that General Cedras has decided to relinquish power, thus paving the way for the return of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

My delegation wishes to commend President Clinton for the leadership and determination he has shown in support of the international community's effort to restore democracy to Haiti and hope and dignity to the Haitian people. The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will continue to be an active participant in all arrangements aimed at ensuring the safe return of President Aristide and in the eventual rebuilding process.

Among the goals that the founding fathers of the United Nations set for the Organization were promoting

> "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom"

and recognizing development as an inalienable right of mankind. Regrettably, third-world countries like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines feel very strongly that this goal has so far been very elusive. With the end of the cold war and the relative success of the United Nations in its peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-enforcement roles, the international community must now attempt to grapple more seriously with the developmental problems faced by third-world countries.

If countries like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are to survive in this harsh world environment, careful and urgent consideration must be given by the international community to the following measures: first, revitalizing growth in developed countries; secondly, liberalizing trade, especially to give market access to the products of developing countries; thirdly, reducing debt and the debt-service burden; fourthly, reversing the deteriorating marketing situation for the primary products of developing countries; fifthly, increasing official development assistance and humanitarian aid; and sixthly, creating a sensitivity to the reduction in net capital flows from bilateral and multilateral sources, as well as to the negative consequences of the graduation of some countries, such as ours, from concessionary funding arrangements of a number of multilateral institutions.

The changing world environment dictates the need for the revitalization and restructuring of the various organs of the United Nations. At the last session of the General Assembly Saint Vincent and the Grenadines called for enlargement of the membership of the Security Council to reflect the current global reality. Today we repeat that call.

My Government attaches very high priority to revitalizing and strengthening the role of the United Nations in the promotion of international cooperation for economic and social development. We share the view that the United Nations should be encouraged to develop its full potential in the area of international economic cooperation and should be endowed with the necessary resources to enable it to contribute to solving the serious economic and social problems facing developing countries in their efforts to achieve sustained economic growth and development.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines hopes that the Secretary-General's Agenda for Development, together with the conclusions of, and the follow-up to, the Rio Conference and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which was held in Barbados, as well as summits and conferences such as the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, will all contribute to better understanding of the problems faced by developing countries and assist the evolution of a global consensus and the mobilization of adequate resources to address these problems effectively.

We do not, however, support the creation of new bureaucracies. There are already enough institutions. What we need are better terms and a speedier reaction to established needs.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines continues to be plagued by the modern-day problem of the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs and psychotropic substances. This scourge poses a serious

threat to the well-being of our people and threatens to destroy the social and moral fabric of our communities.

The archipelagic nature of our State, its many bays and cays and the mountainous terrain and rich alluvial soil of mainland Saint Vincent are characteristics that attract many visitors to our shores and provide scarce foreign exchange to assist us in the development of our country. These very features, however, operate against us in our war against the illicit production of drugs and their distribution by drug barons and their associates. Due to our limited resources, we are unable to police and control our borders and coastlines effectively.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines supports every single measure taken by the United Nations to cope with this serious problem, and calls for continued efforts to eliminate this global scourge.

At the local level, we have been taking forceful steps to confront this evil — pursuing a dynamic drug-abuse-prevention drive and at the same time launching major administrative, legislative and judicial initiatives against the marketing and trafficking of drugs.

My country has viewed with great interest the measures taken by the Secretary-General to revitalize the United Nations so that it is better prepared to attain the objectives of the Charter. In particular, I wish to emphasize the active peace-keeping role of the Organization in the resolution of conflicts that originated before the end of the cold war and of new tensions emerging in hot spots around the world. The peace-keeping forces operating under the United Nations flag perform a fundamental role by paving the way to dialogue and negotiation, thus preventing prolonged confrontations.

We wholeheartedly support this major peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-enforcing thrust of the United Nations. However, we feel that the criteria used in financing the forces involved must be re-examined. The cost of such operations is beginning to prove quite burdensome for both the Organization and its Member States, especially those, like Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with a limited resource base. We look forward to efforts to alleviate the financial burden placed on small developing States by the frequent deployment of such operations.

Today, as we prepare to mark an important milestone in the history of the United Nations, and as we approach the beginning of the twenty-first century, we look forward to a world where democracy, peace, sustainable development and human welfare are be available to all. Mankind has spent almost half a century in pursuit of these goals. Let us continue the struggle and never tire in its pursuit.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the next speaker, the Minister for External Relations of Mongolia.

Mr. Gombosuren (Mongolia): May I offer you, Sir, our sincere congratulations on your election to the high post of President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are confident that under your able guidance the General Assembly will make significant progress on the important issues before it.

We express our deep gratitude to Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana for his admirable work during his presidency.

At the outset, I wish to extend our heartfelt felicitations to the Republic of South Africa, which has begun its advancement along the road of democracy by dismantling the apartheid regime of racial discrimination and has assumed its rightful place in the community of nations. This historic event testifies to the fact that the purposes and principles that guide the United Nations, including that of respect for human rights, can be translated into reality.

A number of other meaningful positive developments have taken place on the international scene over the last year, events that are inextricably linked to the tortuous emergence of a new atmosphere in the wake of the cold war. None the less, instability continues to plague various corners of the globe, bearing witness to the extreme difficulty of finding solutions to problems; hence the urgent need to harmonize our efforts and enhance the role of the United Nations.

The international community is on the threshold of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. As part of the world-wide preparations for this event, a committee has been established in Mongolia to coordinate national activities. The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations coincides with the demise of the cold war, the advent of a new era of mutual trust and partnership among nations and the emergence of unprecedented opportunities to implement the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. This anniversary will serve as an important moment of reflection on the Organization's

past, the lessons from both its successes and its failures and the tasks ahead of us. The world community expects the anniversary session next year to be crowned by the adoption at the summit level of a visionary document embodying its hopes and aspirations and outlining meaningful objectives for the new millennium. It is against this background that we see the special significance of this session of the General Assembly, which is to lay a sound foundation for the anniversary.

The Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Development" is a highlight of this session of the General Assembly. My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for producing a thought-provoking report which offers a comprehensive approach to development and innovative ideas for consideration. We hope that the upcoming discussion of that report will help in the search for an adequate response to persistent inequalities and imbalances, as well as ways to combat the abject poverty, external debt burden and environmental degradation that negatively affect the developing countries.

"An Agenda for Development" is expected to promote people-centred sustainable development through, *inter alia*, a meaningful North-South partnership. In this connection, it would be advisable that the targets of earmarking 0.7 per cent of the industrialized countries' gross national product (GNP) for official development assistance and allocating 20 per cent of that assistance for human priority concerns be reflected in that "Agenda". We also wish to see included in the "Agenda" the idea of allocating 20 per cent of the budget of the developing countries for the aforementioned purpose. An active South-South cooperation is of vital importance for the sustainable development and self-reliance of the developing countries. In this regard the establishment of the South Centre will have a significant bearing on the strengthening of the foundations of such cooperation.

The problems facing the countries in transition and the need for international cooperation to overcome them have found, in our view, a proper reflection in the "Agenda". In order to ensure the success of transition, which has a direct bearing on the future of world developments, it is only fair that greater attention be given to enhancing the effectiveness of international cooperation towards that end. Furthermore, this cooperation should be tailored to the specific conditions of countries in transition. In the case of Mongolia, aside from such handicaps as a low level of development and a disadvantageous geographical location, our economy, in fact, finds itself dependent on another crisis-stricken country in transition.

We believe that the time has come to make every effort to resolve the external debt problem of developing countries, taking into account the vital interests of their socio-economic development and the urgent need to lay the foundation for equitable economic cooperation. On the other hand, it is incumbent upon the creditor nations to display the political will to deal resolutely with that intractable problem. One might add that the realistic assessment of the underlying political and economic causes of the multiplying debt burden should be borne in mind in addressing this issue.

The successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the ensuing decision to create the World Trade Organization represent an important step towards a fairer trading system.

We hope that the entry into force of the Convention on the Law of the Sea will facilitate the solution of problems confronting, above all, the least developed, land-locked and geographically disadvantaged States.

The post-Rio period has registered a welcome shift towards the broadening of international cooperation in addressing environmental issues. Nevertheless, we have to admit that there is a significant disparity between the importance that the international community attaches to this problem and the actual results of the work done in protecting the environment and halting the ecological crisis and remedying its consequences. In this regard, I wish to emphasize that commitments, especially those related to the flow of financial resources and the transfer of technology, have to be faithfully honoured.

As a country exposed to drought and desertification, Mongolia welcomes the conclusion of the negotiations on, and the signing of, the international Convention to combat desertification.

The convening of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen next year is a clear manifestation of the fact that social issues are being brought to the centre of the international agenda. We trust that the Summit will serve as a powerful engine for marshalling political will at the highest level and will bring about a viable action programme to effectively address social challenges. This Summit, taken together with the recent International Conference on Population

and Development and the future conferences on women and on human settlements constitute an intertwined continuous process of international consensus building.

Mongolia is advancing along the road of reforms, relying on the active support of the donor community and of international organizations. The International Monetary Fund-supported enhanced structural adjustment facility programme is in its second year of implementation. There is a positive trend towards checking economic decline and inflation and stabilizing the national currency. The role of the private sector in the national economy is growing considerably. Relying on the experience of the years of transition, we are on our way to finding effective ways and means for the State-governed economy. A great deal has been accomplished in laying down the legal foundations for societal life.

Yet underlying problems continue to persist. At times, we face a situation in which one problem succeeds another. The fuel and energy sector is in a critical state. The living standards of the population continue to decline; poverty and unemployment are on the rise. There is a severe shortage of internal financial resources.

In order to make substantive progress in overcoming these and other difficulties, foreign aid will continue to play a decisive role for some time to come. In this respect, we are looking forward to the fourth donor meeting to be held in Tokyo this November. As hardships seem to persist, the practice of holding regular donor meetings under the auspices of Japan and the World Bank remains essential. We trust that we will receive support and understanding from the parties concerned.

However, this is not to say that we are pursuing a lopsided approach to overcoming the crisis and implementing structural economic adjustments, relying solely on outside assistance and ideas. It goes without saying that the only way, eventually, is in the development of equitable and mutually advantageous cooperation. Proceeding from this premise, we endeavour to attract foreign investment, including private investment, and to create the necessary legal, economic and other conditions.

For any State, and for small States in particular, peace and stability in their respective regions are of vital importance. By and large, positive trends are prevailing in our region, despite the continued existence of hotbeds of conflict and tension. An important factor contributing to these trends is the development of Russian-Chinese relations and cooperation within the framework of friendly partnership. Mongolia welcomes the recent agreement between Russia and China not to target each other with strategic nuclear missiles; we see this as a development that augurs well for stability and confidence-building in the region and beyond. The maintenance of good-neighbourly relations with these two countries is of paramount importance to Mongolia, and today these relations are based on new Treaties on friendly relations and cooperation.

As opposed to the headway made in resolving and preventing crisis situations in Asia, there seems to be no discernible shift for the better on the Korean Peninsula. We hope that the new leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the other parties concerned, bearing in mind the international dimensions of the problem, will display great responsibility in addressing the problems at hand.

The agreement between the Government of Tajikistan and the opposition group on a temporary cease-fire constitutes a first, important step towards national reconciliation in Tajikistan, and should be built upon.

Last year's truly historic developments in the Middle East paved the way for the positive steps that we are witnessing today in the efforts to bring peace to the region, inching towards a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict.

We hope that the United States-Cuba bilateral agreement on the immigration question will prove to have a far-reaching impact on resolving the outstanding issues between these two countries.

We commend the peaceful manner in which the goal of restoring democracy in Haiti was achieved.

The wars that continue to rage in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Afghanistan and the tragedies in Rwanda and Somalia testify to the highly complex nature of these problems and remind us again that the efforts of the international community to resolve them should by no means decrease in intensity.

Bold steps are needed, particularly by the nuclear-weapon States, to solve the mutually interlinked problems of the indefinite extension of the non-proliferation Treaty and the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1995, as well as credible security assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon States.

It is gratifying to note that the five nuclear-weapon States supported Mongolia's declaration of its territory as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and expressed their intention to respect that status. The Non-Aligned Movement has also welcomed that initiative as a commendable contribution to regional stability and confidence-building. In an effort to contribute to the establishment of an effective verification system for the future comprehensive test-ban treaty, Mongolia has expressed its interest in being part of the global seismic monitoring network. We stand ready to cooperate on this question with the interested parties.

The unchecked arms trade and its increase to global proportions, and especially its extension into volatile and unstable regions of the world, is fraught with dangerous consequences. We believe that it is high time for the United Nations to take a close and comprehensive look at the issue with a view to formulating the legal parameters of the conduct of States in this respect.

In recent years the role and influence of the Non-Aligned Movement in world politics have grown. Considerable progress has been achieved in implementing the Jakarta Final Document, which epitomized the new strategy of the Movement in the post-cold-war era. The Cairo Ministerial Conference, held last June, contributed to the enhancement of the Movement's activities. Here, I should also like to mention that this Conference emphasized the need to augment the Movement's efforts with a view to adequately responding to common problems facing the developing countries.

I wish to make a few more comments on the United Nations.

In the wake of the cold-war policy that limited the capacity of the United Nations to implement fully the purposes and principles of its Charter, new opportunities have opened up before the world Organization. All at once, the eyes of the world, full of hope and expectation, have turned to the United Nations. The United Nations has exerted a great deal of effort, and it can be credited with impressive accomplishments, especially in the areas of peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, many Member States have voiced their concern over and criticism of the restructuring of the United Nations and have stressed the need to ensure a proper balance in its activities.

We can well understand the justified criticism that our Organization is disproportionately preoccupied with peace-keeping and security issues at the expense of its urgent development agenda. We expect that with deliberations on and the subsequent adoption of the Agenda for Development there will be less grounds for such criticism.

The composition of the Security Council and its methods of work do not reflect the realities of the time. My delegation hopes that the ongoing deliberations in the Working Group on this issue will be intensified and successfully concluded by the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

We commend and support the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Secretariat. We are confident that the Secretary-General will persevere in his reform process, and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

The Mongolian people is approaching an auspicious event, which will be observed this coming November — namely, the seventieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic, which represents an important juncture in restoring our independence. My people has accomplished since then an arduous journey marked by ups and downs. Today we are continuing our reforms in line with our democratic Constitution of 1992.

In keeping with its foreign policy concept, Mongolia will continue to endeavour to make its own contribution to the common cause of developing friendly relations and cooperation between nations and ensuring peace, security and progress.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Deputy Prime Minister, Attorney General and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bahamas, His Excellency the Honourable Orville Turnquest. I now call on him.

Mr. Turnquest (Bahamas): I wish to join other speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Your experience in international affairs, as well as your proven diplomatic skills, provide the assurance of a successful conclusion of our deliberations.

At the same time, I wish to express our gratitude and sincere appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Rudolph Insanally, for the distinguished manner in which he presided over this historic Assembly during a particularly challenging forty-eighth session, ably

representing not only his country, Guyana, but the entire Latin American and Caribbean region. We commend him for his performance.

Our Secretary-General continues his outstanding stewardship of the United Nations during these critical times, when this world body is increasingly being called upon to respond to crises of staggering dimensions. The Bahamas appreciates his tireless efforts.

Anniversaries are times of celebration and times of reflection. As this world assembly approaches its fiftieth birthday, it is wholly appropriate that we should seek to evaluate our record.

I believe that we can all agree that in our efforts to guide international relations in the 50 years since the end of the Second World War, there have been both successes and failures. We must surely build on the successes and redirect our energies to effectively reduce the number of failures.

The credible success of this world Organization and its specialized agencies in measurably improving the health, literacy and education standards of the world's poor is no mean achievement. So also has been the success of this body in seeking to ensure the environmental integrity of the planet, in galvanizing the resources of the world to fight the illicit drug traffic, and in peacefully resolving disputes.

We can all be justly satisfied that the persistence of this Assembly played a pivotal role in bringing to an end the racist Government in South Africa. The victory of non-racial democracy in that torn land must give us hope even in the face of the most intractable problems. The Bahamas joins other Members in welcoming South Africa back into the fold of the General Assembly.

The Bahamas fully supports the noble cause of the Government of South Africa as it begins the task of reconciliation and reconstruction. President Nelson Mandela and the people of South Africa can be fully assured of my Government's hand of friendship.

Victory in South Africa allowed us to dare to hope for an opening in Haiti. This Assembly knows very well the long history of abuse of that poor Caribbean nation — a land in which the apartheid of wealth has flourished in a destitute country. For many generations now, Haitian nationals have felt compelled to abandon their homes, frequently in unseaworthy boats, in search of personal dignity and of economic and political liberty.

My country has frequently been their first safe harbour, and, while proud of our record of assistance, we have been and remain ill-equipped to offer such refuge. Members are aware of the tremendous burden that my country has had to bear in this regard. This refuge has been provided by the Bahamas in spite of the absence of either recognition or assistance from the international community.

To say that our education, health and welfare resources have been stretched beyond capacity in our small island developing country is to greatly understate the situation. When we add the extra costs attributable to the necessary marine patrols associated with the monitoring of undocumented persons, the full burden created in the Bahamas by Haitian nationals fleeing their homes begins to become apparent.

Hence, the recognition by this body of the absolute necessity for the world community to forcibly respond to the brutality of the military dictatorship in Haiti is very much appreciated. The support given to the early initiative led by the Caribbean Community to force a resolution of the crisis in Haiti has already borne fruit, and we commend the United States of America for its leadership in this important initiative.

We therefore join in welcoming the formation of the multinational force authorized by the Security Council to take all necessary action to restore the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Notwithstanding the tremendous costs that in recent years have accrued to the Bahamas as a result of developments in Haiti, we have also agreed to lend manpower support to that force.

Today's announcement that the coup leaders have resigned and will be leaving the country now paves the way for the desired return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide later this week.

It is especially important that the international community now dedicate sufficient funding and expertise to the economic reconstruction of Haiti to achieve democracy in that land. It must continue to do so even today as Haitians await the announced departure of the feared military from leadership and the return of their elected President. We who promote and encourage the adoption of democratic forms of government must also accept a degree of responsibility to service that democracy, especially in its infancy. The infant democracy that is struggling to be born in Haiti will

surely die unless it receives the succour and support of the international community.

Since the Second World War, the world community has addressed the plight of political refugees. The increased demand to assist persons fleeing political persecution is demonstrated in the ethnic purges and warfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The dramatic exodus, during the first half of this year, of hundreds of thousands of persons across the seas on unseaworthy craft or down long roads across borders dramatically brought to the attention of the world community the plight of undocumented persons seeking shelter outside of their homelands.

The burden borne by the Bahamas as a result of the presence of large numbers of undocumented Haitians is now compounded by the more recent arrival of hundreds of Cubans seeking to enter the United States of America. The Bahamas Government is encouraged by recent efforts by both the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba to address this perennial problem of Cuban migrants.

The gravity of the Haitian crisis, the inhumanity of the genocide in Bosnia, the cruelty of the murders in Rwanda and the ongoing war in Angola all are clarion calls to our Organization and to the world that we must desist from tardy, piecemeal approaches and address in a timely and comprehensive manner not only the effects but the very root causes of these situations.

Not least among these is economics, evidenced by a crisis in development. Despair at the hopeless socio-economic conditions of one's daily life has given rise, in those so affected, to a basic pessimism and to the willingness to risk even one's life for changed circumstances. Where basic needs are unmet and survival is in jeopardy, there is little stake in the future and little reason to consider the sustainability of one's actions. The real threat to our future security is therefore no longer military aggression but deteriorating economic conditions. The alleviation of widespread poverty while managing finite resources in the face of spiralling population growth will be among the major challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Bahamas, therefore, looks forward to the Secretary-General's revised "Agenda for Development", hopeful that it will serve as an effective guideline for the creation and implementation of measures commensurate with the legitimate aspirations of Member States. We must not lose ground in this session by becoming submerged in attempts to redefine development. We must, rather, focus on the different levels of development that exist in our several countries. We must learn their effects and find solutions for narrowing obvious disparities. These solutions must include programmes specially suited to the differing levels of development of Member States.

We must therefore ensure that our quest for sustainable development is people-centred. We must consider sustainable human development with a focus on justice, equality and democratic freedom as well as on material well-being that incorporates equal opportunity for all. Inequity engenders violence, and violence fragments society.

The Bahamas, in spite of its apparent growth and strong economic indicators, is still only a developing nation. However, unlike many other developing nations, the Bahamas is continually frustrated in its efforts to secure international resources and concessionary financing from multilateral institutions because of its reputed level of per capita gross national product.

As a small archipelagic country of a mere 260,000 people scattered over 100,000 square miles, burdened by the cost of transportation and infrastructure replication, and with a very small minority of our residents in an extremely high income bracket whilst the overwhelming majority of the population is at the opposite end of the economic scale, we are advocating that this grossly misleading per capita criterion for gross national product should not be the only basis upon which resources and assistance are allocated to developing countries, such as the Bahamas.

It is the view of the Bahamas that the entire system for determining eligibility for development assistance should be comprehensively reviewed, as it is clear that special consideration ought to be given to countries like the Bahamas, with peculiar imbalances and vulnerabilities. For its part, the Bahamas is engaged in a process of refining its development indicators in an attempt to ensure that data provided to international institutions are truly reflective of our economic-development reality. We expect that the data so provided will also have an impact upon our budgetary assessments.

This comprehensive review, we believe, must include consideration of the vulnerability index identified in the Programme of Action of the Global Conference on Small Island Developing States as the direction to be

followed in the development of a measurement of the ecological fragility and economic vulnerability of small island developing States.

In this connection, I would remind the Assembly of an important message which was reinforced by the recent Conference on Small Island Developing States, that is, that unless the peculiar difficulties of these States are properly addressed, those States will not have the wherewithal to proceed on a path to sustainable development.

The marine environment presents both an opportunity and a constraint with respect to the sustainable development and security of any island State. As a maritime nation, the Bahamas attaches tremendous importance to the Convention, which has resulted in the creation of a new legal regime for the oceans. Among its new achievements are the recognition of the legal status of archipelagos, the 12-mile territorial sea, transit passage, the exclusive economic zone, and the protection and preservation of the marine environment and the resources of the deep seabed as the common-heritage of mankind.

The Bahamas was particularly pleased to join with other Member States in signing the agreement on seabed mining in July of this year, as that agreement modifies provisions that had prevented many States from becoming parties to the Convention. The long awaited entry into force of the Convention is therefore of extreme importance, as it provides a boost to our efforts to curb infringement on both our national security and our national resources.

While the socio-economic health of the world still presents challenges for the Organization, we have scored some political successes in the recent past. These successes include, of course, the peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in September of last year, which led to self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho for the Palestinian people, and the signing of the Washington Declaration between Israel and Jordan last July. We also applaud and encourage the dialogue now under way between Israel and Syria.

In spite of those successes, peace-keeping still occupies an important place in our activities. However, we must ensure that peace-keeping operations are not conducted at the expense of other activities which are equally important, such as the development programmes of the United Nations. After all, development is a prerequisite for peace.

For small countries with limited resources, such as the Bahamas, a major justification for membership in international organizations is the enhancement of national capacity. It is therefore the duty of the United Nations to facilitate the efforts of small countries to arrive at just and equitably sound solutions to differences within the international society of States, especially when they involve political and economic giants.

It is from this perspective that the Bahamas supports the efforts of the Republic of China to entreat the Organization to examine the merits of establishing an ad hoc committee to analyse comprehensively the current implications and future ramifications of the preclusion of the 21 million people in the Republic of China from contributing to, and availing themselves of, all the benefits deriving from membership in the United Nations and its affiliated agencies. Our Organization is expected to reflect universality and to demonstrate impartiality when forging international agreements for policy commitments, for accessing resources and for action.

The Bahamas welcomes the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the question of more equitable representation within the membership of the Security Council. The Group's work thus far has been positive and constructive, and we trust that the momentum of its discussions will be maintained.

The report on the Security Council is of importance to all Member States. As its conclusions affect each Member quite directly, it is essential that the Council should be seen to reflect as accurately as possible the wishes of the entire international community. Accordingly, it is imperative that the composition of a new Security Council properly reflect regional diversity and thereby enhance the legitimacy of the actions of that important United Nations body.

We in the Bahamas look with great expectation to the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The preparatory period for this event is an ideal time for reflection on targets and objectives which have already been set by our Organization, some of which have now been outstanding for many years. Turning fifty is an opportunity for the Organization to regain the confidence of our peoples. It will take hard work and determination to achieve the desired results so that over the next 50 years the United Nations will be known in all societies and across all levels of those societies as the real leader in the fight to bring dignity to mankind.

In the words of the great Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:

"We must not hope to be mowers
And to gather the ripe gold ears
Unless we have first been sowers
And watered the furrows with tears.

"It is not just as we take it,
This mystical world of ours;
Life's field will yield as we make it:
A harvest of thorns or of flowers."

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chad, Mr. Ahmat Abderaman Haggar.

Mr. Haggar (Chad) *(interpretation from French)*: Allow me, Sir, to convey to you on behalf of the people and Government of Chad, our heartfelt congratulations on your unanimous election to preside over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. It was a resounding tribute to your country, whose devotion to peace and dialogue is well known. Not simply Côte d'Ivoire, but the whole of Africa has thus been honoured.

We should like to take this opportunity to salute the memory of the late President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, whose renown as a statesman extended beyond our continent.

I should also like to convey heartfelt thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Rudolph Insanally of Guyana, for the skill with which he conducted the business of our previous session.

Finally, I wish to express our profound gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dedication to international peace and security, to which he has contributed with "An Agenda for Peace", now supplemented by "An Agenda for Development".

We welcome the return to this Hall of South Africa, a South Africa now free of apartheid. We welcome it and wish every success to President Nelson Mandela, whose tenacity should once again be commended.

The picture of the international situation following the end of the cold war is mixed, being one of both hope and uncertainty.

The evolving peace process in the Middle East is an important step towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of a crisis which has persisted for too long. We pay warm tribute to the Israeli and Palestinian leaders who, with their foresightedness and sense of history, have taken this decisive step. We venture to hope that the peoples of this region, sorely in need of peace, have the benefit of the wholehearted support of the international community.

We also commend the efforts now going on to restore democracy to Haiti.

Chad has also been following with interest the process under way in Mozambique, and we hope that the elections to be held on 27 and 28 October will pave the way to a new era of peace and prosperity.

However, grim situations still continue. How can one fail to be outraged at the daily events occurring in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Liberia, Afghanistan or Somalia? Chad, which has been through three decades of conflict, sympathizes with the tragic experience of the peoples of these countries and condemns practices based on ethnic, racial and religious criteria, practices which belong to the past.

This was one of the reasons which prompted my Government to make a modest contribution, first, by its military presence with the French force in *Opération Turquoise*, and then in the second United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda.

Chad urges the United Nations to continue its tireless, energetic peacemaking and peace-keeping efforts and asks the parties involved in any conflict to attach greater importance to dialogue.

In this regard, we welcome developments in the ongoing talks to bring lasting peace to Angola.

We appeal for a speedy solution to the question of the embargo afflicting the Libyan people, a solution in keeping with resolutions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The proliferation of armed conflicts in Africa is a great challenge to us. Chad therefore makes an urgent appeal to the international community to give its wholehearted support to the OAU's machinery for

conflict-prevention, conflict-management and the settlement of conflicts.

Conflicts of any kind are always a disaster for the human race. Therefore, in order to save present and future generations from the danger of a nuclear holocaust, my country supports the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Conventional weapons are a permanent source of concern for Chad. That is why we support resolution 48/75 E and welcome the initiative by President Alpha Omar Konare of Mali to halt the proliferation of such weapons in our region.

Economic development is a constant concern of the international community. That is why the various initiatives and discussions on the subject, as well as the apt analysis in the Agenda for Development, deserve careful consideration at this session. The worsening economic crisis, marked by chronic indebtedness and the drop in the price of raw materials in developing countries in general, and in Africa in particular, has torn at the weak social fabric and threatened the stability of States. This explains the spread of phenomena such as juvenile delinquency, widespread drug-trafficking and organized crime.

However, we look forward to the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen next year, and to the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, also next year.

They will give the international community an opportunity to discuss today's challenges and to try to improve the lives of millions of human beings.

I now turn to Chad, where the democratic process which began with the coming to power of the Patriotic Salvation Movement is continuing, to the satisfaction of all, thanks to the wisdom of our President, His Excellency Colonel Idriss Déby, who has honoured the spirit and the letter of the historic declaration of 4 December 1990 to establish a State of law.

The Sovereign National Conference organized, in a spirit of transparency, with the participation of citizens of Chad of all strata and all political leanings in the presence of foreign observers, adopted a consistent, comprehensive strategy. It thus reflected the general consensus on resolving all our problems, and in particular the creation of a State that respects the rule of law. To that end, a schedule was worked out and transitional institutions were established.

At the last session, my delegation took note of progress made towards democratization. I am happy to say from this rostrum that the transition in Chad is proceeding normally thanks to cooperation between the three organs, the presidency, the *primature* and the Higher Transitional Council.

In order to keep within our deadlines, the framework agreement was reduced to more realistic proportions, backed up *inter alia* by the following priorities: the elaboration of a constitution and texts to govern the upcoming elections; the establishment of a national reconciliation committee consisting of governmental representatives, representatives of the provisional parliament, political parties and civilians. That committee has already achieved some results by signing certain agreements with some organizations, in particular the Bangui II Agreement. We express gratitude to His Excellency Ange Félix Patassé, President of the Central African Republic, for the decisive role he has played throughout the negotiations. At the same time the national reconciliation committee is continuing its contacts with other political and military groups. Our Government is confident that definitive peace will be restored to our country.

Considerable progress has been made in the restructuring of the national army but much remains to be done because of the complexity of the problem of demobilizing elements and reintegrating them into civilian life. We reiterate once more our appeal to the international community to provide assistance in carrying out this essential programme for lasting peace in Chad.

The signing of a social covenant concluded between the Government and the trade unions took place on 1 July 1994. It restored social peace and is the reason for the important progress that has been made in applying the provisions of the framework agreement.

Equally important progress has also been made in other areas. I wish to speak now of human rights and freedoms. For almost four years now we have seen the unprecedented establishment of several independent newspapers, the formation of many political parties, 49 of which have been legalized, and the creation of unions and human rights associations.

The recent establishment of the Supreme Council for Communications is another guarantee of freedom of expression, opinion and information.

I turn now to human rights. My country, which has experienced one of the most cruel and misguided dictatorships, attaches great importance to the promotion and defence of these rights. The ratification of various international instruments and, more recently, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the establishment of the National Commission for Human Rights and the authorization provided by my Government for the visit to Chad of an independent expert from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, attest to this will.

The Government of the Republic of Chad is therefore surprised that certain press organs, certain human rights associations and organizations, manipulated by those who are fighting for power, have launched a campaign that is seeking to mislead international opinion by spreading false information about Chad.

I wish to draw attention to the special situation in my country, where there are many political and military groups equipped with weapons, as a consequence of the long conflict. The abuses committed by uncontrolled groups cannot and should not be attributed to Government policy to violate human rights. I should like, therefore, to take this opportunity to call on all countries and governmental and non-governmental organizations that are interested in Chad and in the future of its people to come to my country to establish the facts.

Free democratic elections will be organized at the beginning of next year in keeping with the timetable established by the framework agreement. On 7 October 1994 His Excellency Colonel Idriss Déby, Head of State, once again reaffirmed his determination to respect the timetable for the elections to give the country reliable democratic institutions, *inter alia*, to guarantee the rights of all citizens. Accordingly, we ask our traditional partners to assist the Government of Chad to conclude this delicate mission which require many resources.

I now turn to the question of the border dispute that existed between my country and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. On 3 February 1994 the International Court of Justice in its Judgment put an end to this 20-year-old conflict. An Agreement on the practical modalities for the implementation of that Judgment was signed on 4 April 1994 in Surt. In keeping with the Agreement the withdrawal of Libyan troops from the Aouzou Strip was carried out according to an agreed timetable and under the supervision of United Nations observers. Now all that remains to be done is to make a reality of the border as defined between the two countries.

I wish to reiterate my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed directly or indirectly to the peaceful solution of this dispute and our gratitude to the United Nations. This fortunate outcome, which reflects the pre-eminence of negotiation over confrontation, is a reason for hope in the matter of prevention and resolution of conflicts.

In the framework of the rehabilitation of the Aouzou Strip and the reintegration of the local population, Chad has already set up a technical committee to study the various aspects of rehabilitation, particularly the restoration of infrastructure, the cultivation of our oases, and the restoration of our education and public health systems. We should also create an environment conducive to all these actions by carrying out mine clearance and disinfecting wells that were poisoned during the occupation. We appeal to the entire international community to help us to carry out this programme.

Chad, like many other countries in Africa, is confronting an unprecedented economic and financial crisis. Existing difficulties have been compounded by the devaluation of the CFA franc, which has wiped out all the efforts by the Government within the structural adjustment framework. My country regrets the fact that the steps to accompany the devaluation have not been entirely honoured. We urge some of our partners to comply with their commitments in this respect.

Chad is a country which is half desert and has suffered a rapid degradation of its environment because of its lack of energy resources and we welcome, therefore, the signing on 17 June 1994 in Paris of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. We hope that the provisions of the Convention will not remain a dead letter.

While in the Sahel rain is welcomed enthusiastically, the rainfall, which has been particularly abundant this year, has caused flooding in many regions of my country, causing serious damage to crops and leaving many

families homeless. At the same time an epidemic of cholera has broken out in some cities in Chad.

We are working together with our various partners, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to deal with these situations following appeals made respectively by the Ministers of Agriculture and Health.

The United Nations will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary next year. To meet the many challenges we must adapt to present changes. Therefore my country supports the common African position on restructuring and the revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

I turn now to the Security Council. I wish to recall that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad stated from this rostrum on 8 October 1976 that

> "The Security Council, whose principal role is to safeguard international peace and security, should reflect the geographical composition of the international community." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings, 23rd meeting, para. 22)*

In the light of ongoing discussion of this question, we reiterate this position because it is a requirement of our time.

I cannot conclude my statement without saying that we hope that the work of the present session will yield answers to our legitimate concerns.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Equatorial Guinea, on whom I now call.

Mr. Oyono Ndong Mifumu (Equatorial Guinea) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I would be disloyal to the feelings of the delegation of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea if I did not from the outset join with the preceding speakers in expressing my best wishes to you and congratulating you on your well-deserved election to the Presidency of this General Assembly. I wish you every success and assure you of the complete cooperation of my delegation. Please convey my congratulations also to the other members of the General Committee, whose work is not always given due recognition.

We also commend the work accomplished by Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who presided over the last session of the General Assembly. And I wish to express special appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our distinguished Secretary-General, for his deep commitment to the search for viable solutions to the problems and difficulties confronting mankind today.

This forty-ninth session of the General Assembly is being held at a time when the international community is expressing its concern at the bleak panorama that the world offers us, and more than ever is proclaiming its right to preserve peace and the socio-political and economic stability of the world. This session of the General Assembly, therefore, must not disappoint these pressing aspirations of the human community, which has every reason to continue to consider the United Nations as the hope of mankind.

It is illogical and inconceivable to the peoples of our world that after the fall of the ideological borders that shaped the bipolar world, we should again be confronted with new burdens and contradictions. My country is deeply concerned at the negative effect of the wave of violence in many parts of the world today. In record time, we have seen evidence of many sources of tension and conflicts that wipe out many years of United Nations efforts. Everywhere panic and uncertainty prevail, owing to the intolerance and arbitrariness that are real threats to world peace. None the less, it would seem that we all want to close our eyes and act as though we did not know the causes of this instability. For the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the causes are all interdependent: poverty, inequality in relations among nations, unemployment, ignorance, and political and religious intolerance.

This forty-ninth session of our General Assembly must therefore reflect deeply in order to find a global solution to these common denominators of all our countries. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea wishes to reaffirm here, from this rostrum, the confidence that it has placed in the United Nations and our conviction that this Organization is the ideal framework for resolving the difficult, delicate and complex problems confronting the international community.

In this grim international panorama, my country, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, is endeavouring to preserve internal peace and political stability, and to maintain a strict policy of good-neighbourliness and

cooperation with the other countries of central Africa. In this framework, we have been strengthening the internal socio-political structures that make it possible to coordinate an integral, democratic system that guarantees the individual and collective freedoms of our citizens. Indeed in 1991, the Government began a transition on the basis of established constitutional provisions and has been establishing the political environment conducive to political pluralism and a multiparty system. A number of legal regulations now govern the exercise of pluralist democracy in my country. May I mention, among them: the law of political parties, the law of freedom of association and expression, our trade union law, the law of freedom of the press and printed matter, the law of freedom of religion, the law of complaints and petitions, and all the other laws that govern the electoral process.

Therefore, the fact is that Equatorial Guinea today is a free, democratic and independent country where peace and stability prevail. With only 400,000 inhabitants, we have 14 political organizations that operate freely and democratically and constitute the pluralist expression of our peoples. None the less, as everyone knows, there are some who, because of their concealed interests, have attempted, and continue to attempt, to thwart the will of some of our political leaders in our democratic process. This is the root cause of the disinformation campaign that is being waged against my country.

Allow me to dwell a moment on this point. Because my country is being subjected to a systematic international campaign of disinformation through certain very well-localized media. Hence a negative image is being projected of my country, in total disregard of the efforts that have been made since 1979 by His Excellency Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, to restore the respectability and honour of my country after 11 long, bloody years of the dictatorship of Macias Nguema, who was overthrown without anyone helping us. Regarding this campaign of disinformation, there is a saying that I would like to reiterate here: "The truth is one, but untruth is manifold". Everything depends on the colour of the lens through which one looks. There are some who, because of their own unconfessed interests prefer to continue to look at us through a dark lens; but we ask the international community to assess our actions in a neutral and objective way, without allowing itself to be influenced by third parties. We ask that you view us through a clear lens that will allow you to see the reality.

Please do not misunderstand me. We are not against the contribution of the international community to the efforts of the people and Government of Equatorial Guinea for democracy and the promotion of human rights and freedoms, but we do believe that these objectives cannot be achieved by promoting and instigating ungovernability, anarchy and civil disobedience in the developing countries.

We see some countries now using the international community's demand for respect for human rights and democracy to mask activities that are aimed at subjugating developing countries such as Equatorial Guinea. None the less, we would like to point out that in the course of this year, certain donors, such as France and Spain and the United Nations Development Programme, have made a positive contribution to our democratic process by giving moral, technical and economic support to our efforts to consolidate democracy. They have done excellent work.

We believe that the escalation of domestic tensions in many African countries today has a common cause: political intolerance, fuelled and promoted by foreign intervention in a country's domestic jurisdiction. However, as the saying goes, "The master's eye makes the horse fat" — in other words, however they may be assessed or distorted from outside, the realities in each of the countries in those regions exist independently of the interpretations placed on them.

We in Equatorial Guinea believe that development and democracy can be promoted only in an atmosphere of peace. We therefore feel that the United Nations should put emphasis on its efforts at preventive action rather than those designed to restore peace or serve as a buffer. Measures such as the dispatch of evaluation or inquiry missions to individual countries can be more effective in avoiding conflicts like those currently taking place in such fraternal and friendly countries as Angola, Rwanda, Liberia, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and so on. Interventions after the fact have been shown to have limited effectiveness.

Some peace-keeping missions and operations in certain conflict areas have also undergone a qualitative change. It is therefore urgent to redirect the mechanisms through which the Organization functions and adapt them to the changes in today's world.

We believe that in an increasingly complicated world, and with limited resources, international relations

must be complementary. In this sphere the role of the United Nations has become even more decisive. It is hardly useful for some to attempt to monopolize the solution to the world's problems if we do not all feel sincerely involved. As an earlier speaker in the general debate noted, there can be neither peace nor justice if discrimination exists in international relations.

My country hopes that the new world scene will witness the implementation of procedures for sincere international cooperation on behalf of those countries that need it most, those countries that are struggling not just to maintain the quality of life but often for their very survival. The poverty and misery in all the countries on Earth calls for action by others to remedy their plight.

United Nations efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security contrast with the limited progress achieved in economic and social development. The global chasm separating rich and poor is steadily widening. We need the solidarity of the industrialized countries, on mutually agreed terms, if we developing countries are to find a definitive solution to our external-debt problem, the burden of which is another obstacle to progress and greater social development.

It would be most promising if agreement could be reached on the mechanisms to solve this economic, financial and socio-economic problem. One such mechanism might be a re-examination of the idea of converting external debt into investment and into projects with proven social impact.

The preservation of the environment and the fight against drug trafficking are questions that demand consideration. The 1972 Stockholm Declaration established the foundations for some universal principles for the protection of the global environment and efforts to control pollution and combat desertification and deforestation. Reality, however, called for new initiatives, which culminated in the Rio Conference on Environment and Development. We hope that the results of that Conference will be of benefit to all and help ensure mankind's the sustainable development and future well-being.

I should, however, like to emphasize the obligation of the developed and industrialized countries — which bear the greatest responsibility for the deterioration of the global ecosystem — to those countries that today are being asked to make the sacrifice of limiting their legitimate right to the use of the riches nature has bestowed on them. Fitting compensation must be forthcoming, particularly through the funding of alternative projects and technological cooperation.

Within its modest financial means, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has been and remains ready to take action to improve its national environment as its contribution to the task of preserving nature throughout the world. The Government of Equatorial Guinea is also giving its constant attention to the struggle against the AIDS pandemic, and, thanks to the deep awareness of the people of Equatorial Guinea and the assistance we are receiving from international agencies, we shall spare no effort to control it effectively. From this rostrum we are appealing to the international community to join us in our efforts to speed and support work in these sectors.

For all those reasons, we hope that the United Nations will continue to enjoy the full support of all of us in working to achieve a better world in the coming 50 years.

Mr. Tshering (Bhutan): I have the honour to convey to you, Mr. President, and, through you, to all the delegations here present the warm greetings and good wishes of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, for the success of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

I should first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your unanimous election, which is a testimony to the high regard that the international community has for your country and the confidence of this Assembly in your personal leadership. Given your long association and intimate knowledge of the United Nations, we are sure you will provide the necessary direction on the many important issues that we are about to take up during this session.

I should also like to take this opportunity to place on record our deep appreciation and gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally for the excellent manner in which he conducted the proceedings of our last session. His innovative and vigorous pursuit of discussions on the reform of the United Nations, the restructuring of the Security Council and the hearings on development have set the stage for the current discussions.

We should like to pay a tribute to our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his distinguished leadership. We appreciate his tireless efforts to steer the United Nations in bold and new directions.

We had the opportunity to welcome President Mandela and to hear his historic and enlightened address in this Hall. We welcome the end of apartheid and South Africa's return to the family of nations.

In the Middle East, the transition of the Gaza Strip and Jericho to Palestinian self-government, the return of President Yasser Arafat and the signing of the Washington Declaration between Jordan and Israel clearly demonstrate the increasing desire for peace in the region. We applaud the parties for the brave decision to embark on the difficult path to peace. It is our hope that all parties will join the process towards peace and reconciliation, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions. It is our hope that the international community will support the Palestinian people in bringing about economic development in the self-rule areas.

The situation in the Gulf warrants our close attention. The international community must reject any threat against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait. We urge all parties to abide by and fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Prince Sisowath Sirirath (Cambodia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The problems in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti and many other parts of the world still demand the careful and urgent attention of the United Nations. These conflicts severely test the international community's capacity and resolve to deal with humanitarian needs and conflict resolution.

We welcome the continued reduction of nuclear weapons and the turning-away of such weapons from their previous targets. We support the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons beyond 1995 and the proposal for the negotiation of a comprehensive test ban. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to continue negotiations in earnest and to comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards agreement; thereby avoiding suspicion and doubt.

My delegation supports the proposal for both the reduction and the clearance of anti-personnel mines. The manufacture of, trade in and deployment of such weapons, which cause indiscriminate and mindless death and maiming, are unconscionable. We urge all parties to participate in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The scope of the exercise should be expanded to include not only trade but also manufacture and stockpiling. The arms trade should cease to provide an opportunity for profiteering on the part of any State.

For several years now we have been talking about restructuring the United Nations. The discussions continue, but, so far, little, if any, substantive reform has taken place. In our humble view, reform of the United Nations must reflect the perceptions and expectations of all Members. For many of the larger Member States, the United Nations is a forum in which to project and promote national policies. But in the case of the developing countries — in particular, the smaller Member States — the United Nations guarantees independence and sovereignty and provides an opportunity to participate in international dialogue. The United Nations also provides both the intellectual and the material input required for social and economic development in many developing countries.

It is clear that the General Assembly — the only forum in which all Members of the United Nations are represented — must be the main focus of our attention. The relationship between the General Assembly and other United Nations organs must be reviewed and put in proper perspective. The General Assembly itself must be able to appreciate and understand the work of the specialized and other agencies of the United Nations and to provide direction. It must also organize itself in such a way that it can deal more effectively with its business. Routine and symbolic resolutions must be dealt with efficiently, allowing the Assembly to focus on new and more important challenges.

The relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council is particularly intriguing. It is a common mistake to think that these two bodies function like the legislature and the executive of a government. This myth has been perpetuated by decades of Security Council paralysis and by the artificial prominence achieved by the General Assembly through the passing of ineffective but symbolically important resolutions. The reality is that there is only one body of authority in the United Nations — the Security Council. The Council's decisions are binding on all Members. They carry the sanction of international law. The Assembly is explicitly forbidden to interfere in the work of the Council unless requested to do so.

The case for reform of the Security Council is overwhelming. The Council must be expanded to reflect the new realities of international relations and to make it a more representative body. It is also important that the

deeper structural flaw be redressed and the Council be made more accountable.

The financial position of the United Nations continues to be a matter of concern. The sudden and quantum jump in expenditure on peace-keeping operations — now more than three times greater than expenditure on development — is becoming difficult to sustain. There are large-scale arrears in contributions. We do not object to peace-keeping operations, but it is clear that the finances of the United Nations must be put on a sound footing. Financial expenditures reflect the direction and priorities of the United Nations, as well as the commitment of its Members.

The Secretary-General, in his report entitled "An Agenda for Development", states:

> "Development is a fundamental human right. Development is the most secure basis for peace." *(A/48/935, para. 3)*

These statements provide, in brief form, the best rationale for recommitment to development in the post-cold-war era. Like peace, development is not a new issue before the United Nations; the United Nations and its agencies have been engaged in international development for decades. What is alarming today is that the gap between the standards of living of developed and of developing countries — the rich and the poor — is growing. The concern arises not because the well-to-do are doing better but because the poor are doing worse. It is no longer just poverty but the destitution of one fifth of the world's population that must be addressed.

Poverty saps the human spirit. It replaces hope with despair, creativity with dullness, admiration with envy, and compassion with indifference. Poverty weakens the body, making it susceptible to sickness and disease. Poverty clouds the mind, making it difficult for people to understand the circumstances of their deprivation, and generating bitterness against those they perceive as the cause of their misery. What is unfortunate is that in this day and age, given the advances that mankind has made in science and technology, commerce and industry and civil and social thought, poverty need not exist.

Considerable efforts have been made to put into proper perspective the major development issues of our time. The World Summit for Children, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Eighth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VIII), the World Conference on Human Rights and the recently concluded International Conference on Population and Development not only generated a remarkable convergence of views but also resulted in commitments to redress global concerns in the participants' respective areas. We have no doubt that the international community will approach the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in 1995, with the same resolve and determination.

We have all committed ourselves to accepting the conclusions of the major conferences, including the various programmes of action and the prescribed targets. All countries are working hard to translate the commitments into action, but the resources available are insufficient for effective and lasting intervention It is a matter of great concern that, in fact, the resources made available for development are declining.

The future of global development clearly hinges on the provision of additional resources — additional resources in the shape of increased official development assistance for both multilateral and bilateral programmes; additional resources from international financial institutions; additional resources through direct foreign investment and trade; and additional resources generated internally through the creation of financial markets and the expansion of the revenue base.

While there seem to be many avenues for increasing the transfer of resources, the reality is that they have yielded little for most least-developed countries. International banking and investments are highly selective and, by their nature, will not be attracted to the least-developed countries, many of which have a small economy and a poor infrastructure. The creation of internal financial markets and the expansion of revenue are hampered by the low level of savings and the limited cash flow in the economy. The capacity of the least-developed countries to compete in international trade is also limited. Clearly, without increased official development assistance many least-developed countries will fall further behind — and their situation is already precarious.

It is ironic that resources for international development should decline when the United Nations agencies are embarking on a major thrust for poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. We urge the donor community to continue supporting the United Nations funding agencies. Although the trend towards

bilateral cooperation is understandable, the donor community should draw on the advantages of working through the United Nations agencies, given their long experience and commendable performance in many areas. These agencies must regain the confidence of the donor community through greater efficiency and better coordination.

Credit is an essential form of input in any major development effort. The crushing debt burden of many developing countries and the manner in which future credit requirements will have to be met must be clearly dealt with in our dialogue on development. Our discussions must include the role of the Bretton Woods institutions, which must be made to work in harmony with the efforts of United Nations agencies.

Bhutan long ago accepted that development must be participatory and environmentally sustainable. To this end Bhutan has committed itself to maintaining 60 per cent of its land mass under forest cover, including 20 per cent as national parks. All development activities have been built around this approach. We have been fortunate to receive the generous assistance of, among others, India, Switzerland, Japan, Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria, Norway, Kuwait, Germany, Australia and the United Kingdom. Considerable support has also been made available from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank and the Asian Bank. We have never taken the involvement of any of our development partners for granted, and we take this opportunity to express the sincere gratitude of the people and the Government of Bhutan to all of them.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is a time for celebration. There is much that the United Nations has achieved for which we should all be proud. Yet it is also a time for reflection and self-assessment. The success of the next 50 years of the United Nations will depend largely on our ability to meet the challenges of global human development.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Several representatives wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish):* In exercise of its right of reply, my delegation would respectfully like to offer the following clarifications on a part of the statement made on 4 October by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay, Mr. Luis María Ramírez Boettner, during the current general debate.

In his statement the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay said:

> "Paraguay declares its deep concern at the situation affecting the Pilcomayo River, which is an international waterway inasmuch as its source is in Bolivia and it forms the border between Argentina and Paraguay.
>
> "We are now facing a major environmental problem since that international river springs from the mountains and is now growing shallower in its course because of sedimentation build-up. Moreover, the Pilcomayo, owing to works undertaken on Argentine territory, has had some 70 per cent of its volume absorbed in the territory of our neighbour. These facilities are doing a great deal of damage to the Chaco region of Paraguay, especially to its livestock and to the population." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 17th Meeting, p. 22)*

Argentina is deeply committed to a policy that deals with the problem of the environment and sustainable development at the national, regional and global levels.

As for the comments made on the Pilcomayo River, Argentina has taken part in costly projects, agreed upon between Argentina and Paraguay in November 1991, designed to mitigate the effects of the blocking of the Pilcomayo River in both countries. In fulfilment of the agreements of November 1991, Argentina properly and punctually completed the projects it was supposed to carry out in its territory, but the projects that are to be carried out in the territory of the Republic of Paraguay are still not completed. For this reason we consider it inappropriate to attribute the responsibility for the

damage done to the Chaco region of Paraguay to the projects carried out in Argentine territory.

Argentina agrees with the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the solution to the problem of the Pilcomayo River lies in the upper basin. We therefore regard as essential the ongoing participation of the Republic of Bolivia in the talks on this subject.

Finally, we wish once again to say to the Republic of Paraguay — to which we are bound by strong ties of historical brotherhood and by a successful economic-integration project, the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) — that we are committed to promoting overall sustainable development in our region through joint, mature, objective analysis.

Mr. Zacharakis (Greece): I do not think there is really any need to take much of the Assembly's time for a lengthy reply to the Albanian representative, who on 7 October spoke in exercise of the right of reply to my statement of 5 October. Quite simply, while he assumes that he has given an answer to me, he has not, in fact, responded to the plethora of statements, summonses, appeals and accusations of the international organizations, non-governmental organizations and observers that I quoted in my statement.

Of course, I do not know whether this is due to the fact that the Albanian Government has nothing to say or whether it reflects, once more, its well-known mentality and attitude of defying and ignoring the democratic international community. This is precisely the problem, a problem which, as I have already underlined, does not constitute a bilateral difference between Greece and Albania but, rather, between the latter's Government and the international community, to which the Government in Tirane has yet to give a factual and convincing answer with regard to respect for fundamental human rights and the implementation of the relevant international instruments.

It is noteworthy in this respect that the Albanian representative gave us a rather poor picture of his country's present-day performance by comparing it not with the accepted high standards of modern, democratic societies but, rather, with a dictatorial Stalinist regime of the worst kind which was accepted and reigned in Albania for more than four decades.

Lastly, it is one thing to avoid responding to the specific negative assessments of international organizations and observers, while it is an entirely different thing to misinform the Assembly with false and inaccurate statements, such as the assurances given by the Albanian representative in an attempt to deny what I had said, and his statement that there is no report of Mr. Rjeplinski concerning the trial of the five minority leaders and, further, that only one document exists on this issue, in the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), entitled "Report of the trial monitoring in Tirane". Well, the truth is that there is indeed a report of Professor Rjeplinski, entitled "Report from the CSCE/Office of the Director of Human Rights Trial Observation in Tirane, Albania", dated 6 September, which has been circulated in the CSCE and will also be circulated in the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.26

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

26th Meeting
Tuesday, 11 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Tentative programme of work

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/INF/49/5/Add.1, which contains a tentative programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings for the months of October and November. The addendum supersedes document A/INF/49/5. I should like to point out that this schedule is being issued as early as possible in order to assist delegations in planning their work. For its part, the Secretariat will endeavour to ensure that the relevant documentation will be available to delegations ahead of the discussion of any given agenda item.

I should further point out that there are still a few agenda items for which no date has been indicated. I will announce the dates for the consideration of those agenda items in due course and sufficiently in advance. I will also keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes.

The list of speakers for each of the items listed in document A/INF/49/5/Add.1 is now open.

Further, I should like to inform representatives that the Pledging Conference for Development Activities will be held on Tuesday, 1 November, and Wednesday, 2 November, in the morning. I should also like to inform members that the announcement of voluntary contributions to the 1995 programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will take place on Friday, 11 November, in the morning.

As I mentioned to the Assembly last week, I hope to keep as close as possible to this schedule so that the Assembly can discharge its responsibilities in an effective fashion. I therefore appeal to those representatives submitting draft resolutions to do so sufficiently in advance of the dates fixed for consideration of items in order to give members adequate time to examine them.

I should also like to remind representatives that additional time is needed for those draft resolutions involving changes in the work programme or additional expenditures, since these will require the preparation of a statement of programme-budget implications by the Secretary-General. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee will need adequate time to review the programme-budget implications of a draft resolution before the latter can be acted on by the Assembly.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I call first on the Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uganda, His Excellency Mr. Paul Ssemogerere.

Mr. Ssemogerere (Uganda): Permit me, Sir, on behalf of the Uganda delegation, to congratulate you most warmly on your well-deserved unanimous election to the

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This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Your election is a recognition by our Organization of your exemplary personal qualities. It is, indeed, a great honour to your country, Côte d'Ivoire, with which Uganda enjoys warm fraternal relations. I am confident that, with your skills and experience, you will be able to guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion. I wish to pledge Uganda's full support and cooperation to you in your endeavours.

I also wish to pay special tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana, for the able manner in which he steered the work of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Our appreciation goes to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his courageous and clear-sighted leadership of the Organization.

At the outset, let me say how warmly Uganda welcomes the presence in our midst of a new South Africa, born on the principles of equality, justice and democratic governance. I wish to pay a special tribute to His Excellency President Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the South African liberation movements, and to Mr. de Klerk, for their vision and statesmanship, which enabled the United Nations to achieve one of the key long-sought objectives of Africa.

Since the last session of the General Assembly, several developments have taken place in the international arena; some of these have offered hope and encouragement, while others have led to frustration and despair. In many countries, peace, the rule of law and democratic governance are being consolidated. However, in some others, such as Angola, Somalia, Liberia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, conflicts have caused untold suffering, loss of life and destruction of property, and have contributed to the staggering numbers of refugees and displaced persons, with the attendant negative consequences.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates the number of refugees and displaced persons worldwide to be over 23 million and 26 million respectively. Africa is estimated to have over 32 per cent and Asia over 25 per cent of the total refugees. Seven countries in Africa are among the top 10 countries of origin of refugees. Most of these refugees and displaced persons have fled as a consequence of conflicts, mainly within nations, but to a lesser extent between nations. This is a vivid, awesome picture for Africa in particular, and for developing countries in general.

Uganda welcomes the increasing priority attention being given by the United Nations to the resolution of conflicts in Africa and elsewhere, especially the emphasis given by the Secretary-General in "An Agenda for Peace" to preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. We agree with his view that security, socio-economic well-being, environmental sustainability and the protection of human rights are closely interdependent and interlocked in a mutually reinforcing manner. They should therefore be addressed in tandem in order to avert conflicts and their attendant negative effects, such as the outflow of political and economic refugees, capital flight and brain-drain.

We welcome the establishment of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Such a mechanism is useful for confidence-building among rival parties and can facilitate peaceful resolution of conflicts. Uganda is committed to making the OAU Mechanism effective and usable. We urge the United Nations and the international community to lend it the requisite support.

The situation in Somalia remains tense and fragile with serious negative implications for peace, national reconciliation and orderly provision of humanitarian assistance. Uganda supports the new emphasis by the international community on seeking a political settlement to the Somalia conflict. Uganda urges all Somali groups and factions to put behind them fear and mistrust, and to begin to implement all commitments they undertook in the Nairobi Declaration on National Reconciliation in order to pave the way for the implementation of the Addis Ababa Agreements, including the establishment of transitional administrative mechanisms. We commend the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) for facilitating the flow of humanitarian assistance and we urge continued international support to Somalia.

As regards Liberia, Uganda was encouraged by steps taken to begin the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement, namely the establishment of the Liberia National Transitional Government and the initiation of the process of disarmament and demobilization of various combatants. However, we are disappointed by the increasingly tense military situation on the ground, both within and between parties, which has brought the process of disarmament and demobilization to a virtual standstill. We urge all parties to show seriousness to the

process of peace and national reconciliation as this is vital for continued international support and a continued presence.

Uganda welcomes steps taken so far by the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO to implement the general peace agreement. We urge the parties to remain committed to the peace agreement and to respect the outcome of the elections scheduled for 27 and 28 October 1994. We commend the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ), which has helped to engender confidence among the parties — vital for the successful implementation of the peace agreement — and we urge continued international assistance to Mozambique, especially in the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons.

The situation in Angola remains a matter of concern to the international community despite ongoing Lusaka negotiations between the Government of Angola and UNITA. The people of Angola continue to suffer from indiscriminate killings and destruction of property. My delegation urges the parties concerned, especially UNITA, to demonstrate flexibility, realism, political will, tolerance and compromise, which are necessary for peace and national reconciliation.

The civil war in southern Sudan has continued to escalate, with an enormous loss of lives, destruction of property and a large number of refugees and displaced persons. Uganda alone hosts an estimated 300,000 Sudanese refugees. We urge the parties to the conflict to set their sights on the common good and mutual accommodation in the ongoing regional efforts — in particular, the Inter-Governmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD) initiative — which are aimed at finding a durable political settlement.

As regards Western Sahara, Uganda is concerned at the slow progress towards the holding of a United Nations supervised referendum on self-determination of the people of that territory. We appeal to the parties to overcome their differences and enable a just and impartial referendum to be effected.

The systematic and widespread massacres of civilians which took place in Rwanda were tragic and deplorable. Uganda supports the setting up by the Secretary-General, on 29 July 1994, of an impartial commission of experts to investigate violations of international humanitarian law and acts of genocide committed in Rwanda with a view to identifying persons responsible for those violations and bringing them to justice. This should contribute to the process of national reconciliation. We are encouraged by the declaration of the Government in Rwanda that it will be guided by the spirit of the Arusha Peace Agreement as a framework for peace and national reconciliation and for its support for the regional initiatives on the problem of Rwandese refugees. Similarly, we also appeal for assistance to be extended to local populations in neighbouring countries that are hosting the refugees, in order to mitigate the adverse socio-economic and environmental effects they are facing as a result of the influx of refugees.

Uganda congratulates the Governments of South Africa and Namibia for settling, through peaceful means, their long-standing dispute over Walvis Bay and the offshore islands.

Uganda notes the flexibility shown by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya with regard to implementation of Security Council resolution 731 (1992). We hope that this will contribute to a peaceful resolution of the problem.

Uganda welcomes the initiation of Palestine self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. We commend Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Rabin for their political steadfastness, which made this possible. We encourage them to continue working together to resolve all outstanding issues for the full implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We appeal to the international community to provide increased assistance to Palestine which is needed for reconstruction and development.

We express our satisfaction over the signing by Jordan and Israel of the Washington Declaration by which the two countries mutually agreed to end the state of war between them. This should go a long way in helping to build confidence, facilitating the normalization of relations, concluding a formal peace treaty between the two countries and between Israel and other countries in the region.

Uganda supports efforts with a view to the peaceful resolution of the problem in the Korean peninsula and urges all parties to work together to create an atmosphere that will help ease the tension and that is conducive to negotiating a durable political settlement of the Korean problem.

Uganda welcomes the developments in Haiti directed towards the return of President Aristide and the

restoration of a democratically elected Government in that country.

Uganda is deeply concerned over the continuing genocide and "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We urge the United Nations and the international community to act decisively and to take appropriate steps to end hostilities in accordance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as the peace plan of the Contact Group and to create an environment conducive to a smooth and timely flow of humanitarian assistance to the people affected.

Uganda is encouraged by some positive developments that have taken place in the area of disarmament. We note the ongoing formal negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (CTBT), under the auspices of the Conference on Disarmament, and urge successful completion of the CTBT prior to the convening of the Review Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to be held early in 1995. As a State Party to the NPT, and in the context of the preparatory process and review of the Treaty, Uganda will seek the removal of all imbalances in the NPT and the securing of adequate technical assistance for developing countries in the peaceful application of nuclear technology. We also note the progress that is being made to strengthen the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction through measures such as mandatory data exchanges and periodic on-site visits. These measures are useful in engendering confidence in compliance and in helping minimize violations of the Convention. We are also encouraged by the possibility of the entry into force in mid-1995 of the 1993 chemical weapons Convention.

The treaty on an African nuclear-free zone will be yet another important landmark for peace in Africa. Uganda urges its timely and successful conclusion.

It is imperative to consolidate achievements so far recorded in the area of nuclear testing and non-proliferation in order to lay firm ground on which to make progress in other new and more challenging areas of disarmament.

Uganda is committed to the full respect and universal enjoyment of human rights. We reaffirm our support for the Declaration and Programme of Action on human rights, and welcome the appointment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. For its part, Uganda has established a human rights national focal point within the Justice Department aimed at enhancing public awareness and developing national capacity in the observance and promotion of human rights in the country. My delegation wishes to pay special tribute to all countries that have extended support to Uganda in this vital area of our development, and we appeal for continued support.

Uganda is committed to democracy, good governance and the rule of law. A democratization process in the country is well under way. The Constituent Assembly was successfully elected on 28 March 1994. The Assembly is currently debating a draft constitution, which is expected to be finalized and promulgated by the end of 1994. That will be followed by nationwide presidential and legislative elections in early 1995.

Uganda is concerned about the current trends in the global economy which continue to weigh unfavourably on many developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Excruciating external indebtedness remains a major impediment to our development. Many of our countries are spending large proportions of meagre export earnings on debt-servicing alone. For instance, as of 30 June 1994 Uganda had a total external public sector debt of $2.99 billion — over 80 per cent of estimated gross domestic product for the 1993-1994 financial year. Contractual debt-servicing was $185 million — almost 76 per cent of export earnings; while arrears to be cleared were $222 million — or 91 per cent of export earnings. The situation is compounded by the fact that 77 per cent of the total stock of debt, which is the portion owed to multilateral and bilateral institutions, is currently ineligible for restructuring or reduction.

The problem of external indebtedness is further aggravated by unfavourable terms of trade, especially the collapse of our export commodity prices, severely contracted resource inflows and limited access to technology. In addition to these unfavourable conditions, most of our countries are implementing stringent economic reforms, with their attendant adverse socio-economic implications for our people. This notwithstanding, some countries, including Uganda, are registering positive economic growth and controlling inflation.

For economic reforms to succeed in our countries, all creditors, including multilateral institutions, should adopt enhanced measures that go beyond debt-rescheduling in order to bring about a substantial

reduction in our total stock of debt. Such measures should include substantial debt cancellation or conversion into grants and/or other innovative schemes such as the use of reserves, a new issue of special drawing rights and debt swaps. In this regard Uganda endorses the conclusion of the recent Jakarta Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on "Debt and Development: Sharing of Experiences" and also endorses the recent proposal by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer on measures to resolve the debt problem of the poorest countries.

Equally, there is a need significantly to increase resource in-flows to our countries — for example, through increased levels of official development assistance; foreign direct investment in areas such as manufacturing, agricultural processing and tourism; and the provision of remunerative commodity prices. Uganda, in the context of the preparatory process and next year's mid-term global review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, will also seek the adoption of similar measures in favour of the least developed countries.

As regards the Uruguay Round, Uganda urges that in the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act special offsetting measures be adopted to obviate adverse effects that are likely to arise from the erosion of special preferences currently enjoyed by some developing countries under arrangements such as the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and Lomé IV. Further, the way should be eased for more developing countries to gain increased access to international markets for their products, in order to augment their export earnings. We also urge that the necessary assistance be provided to enhance our capacity to produce value-added goods and services for international markets.

The Secretary-General's "Agenda for Development", which has been submitted to this session of the General Assembly, provides a useful framework for political dialogue between the North and the South on practical measures to make operational the international policies, programmes and actions on development which have so far been adopted by the international community. My delegation supports this initiative. As we elaborate on the Agenda, we should be guided by the overall objective of effecting a substantial, rapid improvement in the quality of life in developing countries, through the eradication of poverty and the provision of basic needs, namely, nutrition, shelter, health and education. Equally, we endorse the proposal made by Brazil for the convening of a United Nations conference on development some time in 1996.

Uganda welcomed the fact that the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/214 on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, agreed to address the full range of issues related to the diversification of African economies, with particular attention to be given to the issue of the establishment of a diversification fund for African commodities. Uganda attaches great importance to the establishment of such a fund. We appeal to our developed partners to be understanding and flexible in the negotiations in order to enable the facility to be put in place as soon as possible.

The international economic system dictates that we enlarge our economic horizons beyond national boundaries in order to widen our markets. Uganda welcomes the coming into force, of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, which provides a useful framework for coordination of African development efforts at the continental level. In order to succeed, efforts to be pursued at subregional levels should be well coordinated and rationalized. Uganda is committed to full implementation of the Treaty for the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Arusha Treaty on revived East African cooperation. We appeal to the international community to provide requisite assistance to support our regional integration efforts in order to strengthen or create infrastructures that facilitate the movement of goods and services.

Uganda reaffirms its support for Agenda 21 and other agreements on sustainable development adopted in Rio de Janeiro. However, it is necessary that the Rio political momentum be translated into practical measures to implement all commitments agreed upon, especially with regard to the provision of financial resources and the transfer of technology to developing countries. For its part, Uganda is committed to addressing all causes and effects of environmental degradation, particularly poverty. For instance, we are sparing no efforts in seeking ways and means to exploit our enormous potential in hydroelectric power and solar energy, which are environmentally sound and are economic alternatives to wood fuels. This will help stem the current widespread forest depletion. We appeal to the international community to support our efforts in the area of sustainable development.

The most important outcome of the Cairo Conference on population was the endorsement of the view that the problem of population is not just a question of numbers; rather, the critical issue is that of human

development and welfare. In this regard, the challenge is to improve people's standard of living in such areas as the provision of education and health, housing, transportation, clean water and sanitation, and to eradicate poverty. In developing countries especially, population problems that arise from irresponsible parenthood are ultimately a result of socio-economic despair and ignorance, and these demand our foremost attention.

As a follow-up to the 1990 Programme of Action on children, Uganda has established the National Council for Children to oversee national activities aimed at their protection, promotion and development.

We support the convening of the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development in March 1995 to address issues of poverty- eradication, productive employment and social integration, which we hope will lead to the improvement of standards of living, especially in the most impoverished countries. We also support the convening of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 to devise measures for the enhancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Uganda will continue to participate actively in the preparatory processes of both meetings.

The reform of the Security Council, in our view, should aim at achieving greater transparency in its methods of work, making it more democratic in decision-making and reflective of the increased United Nations membership in its composition. We therefore support the proposal to expand its membership. However, in our view, its expansion should increase the number of seats for developing countries on an equitable regional basis, to reflect the increased membership of developing countries in the United Nations and the fact that the agenda of the Security Council is increasingly dominated by issues of concern and interest to developing countries, such as conflict-resolution and humanitarian emergencies. As regards the Council's decision-making procedures, our view is that a proportionate number of developing countries, including African countries, should be accorded rights and responsibilities similar to those currently exercised by permanent members of the Security Council.

Our legacy to future generations is to put in place a firm institutional framework that can adequately and equitably respond to the interests and concerns of all mankind, rich and poor alike. This is the challenge that faces our Organization as we enter the fiftieth anniversary year of the United Nations.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, His Excellency Mr. Ohn Gyaw.

Mr. Gyaw (Myanmar): The delegation of Myanmar would like to congratulate you most warmly, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session and to assure you of our fullest cooperation in the discharge of your responsibilities. We are confident that the wealth of experience and wisdom that you bring with you will prove invaluable in guiding us successfully through the present session.

We also wish to express our appreciation to the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Rudolph Insanally, for his sagacious and outstanding stewardship of the previous session of the General Assembly.

In South Africa, four decades of the despicable system of apartheid have finally been laid to rest. The election of President Nelson Mandela by the country's first multiracial Parliament has given birth to a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. A nation that has so courageously overcome such adversity and overwhelming pressure deserves our support and acclaim as it faces its future with optimism. I am pleased to see the delegation of South Africa rejoining us in this Assembly. Its presence here reflects the momentous changes taking place in the world today. The concerted effort to abolish apartheid in South Africa has finally succeeded. We welcome our brothers from South Africa, wish them every success in rebuilding their nation and look forward to working closely with their Government and people.

The importance of adhering to the five principles of peace coexistence that form the basic tenets of Myanmar's foreign policy bears reiteration. Myanmar, together with the People's Republic of China and India, enunciated those principles nearly five decades ago. These time-tested principles have crystallized as the universally accepted legal norms of inter-State relations. In strict observance of these principles, Myanmar has never allowed, and will never allow, its territory to be used as a springboard for action or threats against another State. By the same token, Myanmar expects that other nations will likewise abide by these principles in their conduct of policy towards Myanmar.

At this time of dramatic and profound changes, the United Nations represents the best hope for mankind in

the maintenance of international peace and security and in the promotion of international cooperation in other areas of human endeavour. Whatever character and shape the emerging new international order may eventually assume, we have no doubt that the United Nations will constitute a vital element in that new order and will continue to play an increasingly important role in international relations. As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, it is the appropriate time for us to rededicate ourselves to the purposes and principles of the Charter and to redouble our efforts to further strengthen the role of the world Organization. In order to mark this auspicious anniversary in a fitting manner, we have formed a high-level National Committee in my country to carry out necessary preparatory work and to coordinate commemorative activities at the national level.

Myanmar firmly believes that the United Nations plays a pivotal role in promoting international cooperation for development and for the maintenance of peace and security. There is a close link between peace and development; it is therefore the view of my delegation that the Agenda for Peace and the Agenda for Development must go hand in hand. Now that the cold war is over and the avenues for peace and development are more pronounced, we would like to call upon the international community to create a favourable environment that ensures sustainable development.

My delegation shares the view that at the present time the search for security and peace in the world lies in development, not in armaments. For most people throughout the world, and particularly in developing countries, any feeling of insecurity arises more out of anxieties about daily subsistence than out of the dread of a cataclysmic global conflict. Underdevelopment creates poverty, hunger, malnutrition, environmental degradation and so on, collectively leading to civil strife, ethnic conflicts and, eventually, the collapse of peace and security. These problems may in some instances be confined within national borders; however, some will definitely have international and even global ramifications and consequences.

Both "An Agenda for Peace" and "An Agenda for Development" are top-priority tasks facing the United Nations, and they deserve equal attention and equal allocation of resources. United Nations peace-keeping missions are stretched out across the globe, and United Nations agencies for development and humanitarian affairs fan out over an even wider area. Myanmar shares the view that economic and social developments are prerequisites for lasting peace and security. We would therefore like to see a strengthening of the Economic and Social Council in tandem with the call for a restructuring of the Security Council to respond adequately to the new challenges of international peace and security that have emerged in the wake of the cold war. Fifty years ago, against a political background that was very different from today's, the United Nations was born with the purposes of maintaining international peace and security, promoting development and safeguarding human rights. Now that the cold war is over and the international community is free from the super-Power rivalry that so crippled the United Nations in the past, the Organization should be restructured to meet the needs and challenges of the present-day world.

Peace-keeping is an area in which the United Nations is being called to take on increasing responsibilities. These operations constitute an important instrument of the world Organization in the prevention and containment of conflicts and in keeping peace where it is most needed. Peace-keeping operations have a mixed record of successes and some set-backs. Experience and lessons from past operations should be carefully reviewed and re-evaluated to ensure the more effective and proper conduct of such operations. It is imperative that United Nations peace-keeping operations be carried out only with the consent and willing cooperation of the parties concerned and that all aspects of such operations strictly conform to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. There is also a need for such operations to be rationalized, streamlined and made more cost effective.

In the field of disarmament we are encouraged by the positive developments of last year. Intensive negotiations are now under way in the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament to achieve a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. The steadily increasing trust and confidence between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States has provided an opportunity for the international community to come to grips with the prevention of the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. This opportunity should be seized by bringing the negotiations on the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty to a successful conclusion in the most expeditious way. The United States has announced its decision to extend the moratorium for one year until September 1995. We believe that such a moratorium, if also observed by other nuclear-weapon States, would create conditions conducive to the ongoing process of negotiating a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

The review and extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is less than a year away. We are of the view that substantive progress in crucial areas, namely the comprehensive test-ban treaty, negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States and a ban on the production of nuclear fissile material in all its aspects, will contribute to a successful outcome of the review Conference. A careful evaluation of the progress achieved in these crucial areas should be made before taking a decision at the review Conference on the further extension of the Treaty. Myanmar looks forward to working and cooperating with other delegations for the successful outcome of the 1995 review and extension Conference.

While I am on the subject of the NPT, may I take this opportunity to inform the Assembly that, as a State Party to the Treaty, the Myanmar Government has decided to sign the International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards Agreement and Protocol. The signing of the Agreement and Protocol will take place in the near future.

Myanmar is also actively taking part in the preparatory process for the implementation of the chemical weapons Convention since becoming an original signatory to it. Like other signatories to the Convention, the ratification process is currently under way in Myanmar.

The signature on 4 May 1994 of the agreement to implement the Israel-Palestine Declaration of Principles marks an important milestone towards a lasting peace in the Middle East. The recent approval by the Israeli Cabinet of the transfer of civilian powers to the Palestinians in the areas of culture, youth and sports, international cooperation, education, health, social welfare, tourism and finance is another positive step that will further pave the way to self-rule by the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. We congratulate the parties concerned for their courage and mutual accommodation. We are also heartened to note that both Israel and Jordan are implementing the Washington Declaration signed by both parties in July. It is hoped that these initiatives, in the context of both bilateral and multilateral negotiations, will facilitate and brighten the chances of lasting peace in the Middle East.

After years of recession and stagnation the world economy has resumed a modest growth. However, the recovery remains fragile and uneven, and it is in the interests of both developing and developed countries to strive for accelerated growth and sustainable development. While a number of developing countries have acted as the main engines of world economic growth, most of them are beset by a deteriorating economic and social situation. Developed countries are also facing slow growth and high unemployment. In this era of growing globalization and interdependence, concerted efforts by the world community are urgently needed to resolve the acute economic and social problems.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report, "An Agenda for Development", as most timely and appropriate. The report has highlighted economic growth as a crucial dimension of development and has singled out a supportive and favourable international economic environment for sustained growth. We fully share the view that the advancement of developing countries is being hindered by such obstacles as external-debt problems, declining external resource flows, sharply deteriorating terms of trade and mounting barriers to market access. We hope that the programme of action on the implementation of the agenda will be agreed upon at this session.

Our aspirations for a new world economic order which is equitable and non-discriminatory have not yet been realized. The major challenges of these decades — acceleration of development, alleviation of poverty, narrowing the widening gap among countries — need to be addressed on an urgent basis. We fully support the call by the Group of 77, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Assembly for the resumption of the stalled North-South dialogue. A constructive dialogue based on common interests and mutual benefits should enhance international economic cooperation for development.

We also welcome the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round, although our aspirations were not fully realized. We had hoped for an open, equitable and transparent multilateral trading system which would benefit all countries. We are most concerned with new forms of protectionism, particularly the attempts to impose social and environmental conditions that discriminate against exports from developing countries. These protectionist measures will adversely affect world trade and growth.

We are heartened by the Communiqué issued following the Naples Summit of the Group of Seven, which states that the Seven will continue efforts to enhance development assistance, trade and investment in developing countries. It states also that the Seven favour a reduction in the stock of debt and an increase in

concessionality for those countries facing special difficulties.

My delegation notes with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on the status and role of cooperatives in the light of new economic and social trends and welcomes the recommendations contained therein. Today, cooperative societies constitute significant components of the economies of developed and developing countries alike and play a crucial role in their economic development.

In my country, we attach great importance to the cooperative sector as one of the main pillars of our economy and as an effective means of accelerating socio-economic development. It is an important part of the economic strategy of the Myanmar Government to promote and expand the cooperative sector in our national economy. As we shall next year be celebrating the centenary of the establishment of the International Cooperative Alliance, it is most fitting that the Assembly should proclaim the first Saturday of July 1995 the International Day of Cooperatives and that Member States should observe this day in future years as an annual event.

The Earth Summit held in Rio two years ago firmly placed environmental issues on the global agenda, and since then hardly any international meeting has taken place without calls for common action to save our planet. The protection and promotion of the environment has emerged as one of the most pressing issues facing the world. No longer is the natural world perceived as a vast and inexhaustible frontier to be explored and exploited. Today there is growing recognition that the environment is not to be subjugated, but is to be treated with respect and care. An increasing number of countries now recognize that environmental issues warrant as much attention and effort as issues such as disarmament, narcotics and human rights.

Myanmar is pleased to note that, in all of this, the region of Asia and the Pacific has not been left behind. A regional meeting to prepare for the 1995 report on the state of the environment was held in Yangon in July this year. This meeting provided senior Government officials with an opportunity to discuss, in an integrated manner, issues related to the assessment of the state of the environment at the national and regional levels.

The region of Asia and the Pacific comprises a large number of nations differing in size, resource endowment and stage of economic development. It is a region facing all the conceivable environmental problems of the world - deforestation, desertification, climate change, and so on. While several countries of the region, particularly those in South-East and North-East Asia, have registered remarkable economic growth in the last few decades; others have yet to achieve their objectives.

In many of our countries the eradication of poverty and greater equity in income distribution remain major challenges. Poverty and environmental degradation are closely related. Therefore, the alleviation of poverty is no longer simply a moral issue; it is a practical imperative. At the same time, achieving sustainable development will require that all countries, particularly the developed countries, change their consumption patterns.

In the past we have tended to focus more on remedial measures than on the causes of environmental degradation. But if we are to overcome the challenges that we face we must deal with the underlying causes. As in the case of health care, prevention is just as important as, if not more important than, cure. We must therefore formulate strategies that will set out to alleviate poverty and provide the basic needs — food, water, clothing, shelter, energy and health care — of our peoples, while protecting the environment.

Aware of the fact that poverty is the fundamental cause of environmental degradation, we in Myanmar are concentrating on breaking the vicious circle of poverty and environmental degradation. With a view to remedying the situation, the Government launched in 1989 a programme for the development of border areas and national races. This integrated approach is expected to generate higher incomes and productivity by providing employment opportunities and increased welfare.

The border areas, which are inhabited by the national races, have lagged far behind in all aspects of development, owing mainly to the difficult terrain and the lack of an adequate infrastructure. However, the situation is being improved rapidly. There is extensive building of roads, bridges, schools, hospitals and reservoirs. The Government's support for the development of mini-plants to generate hydroelectric power will result in the provision of alternative sources of energy, which will enable towns and villages to promote rural industries and, at the same time, lessen their dependence on fuel wood.

This integrated rural-area-development programme will not only have positive effects on the socio-economic environment but also drastically reduce the area under shifting cultivation. The result will be conservation and

the regeneration of forest resources in the fragile mountain ecosystem.

The sustainable management and conservation of forests has long occupied a place of pride in Myanmar's environmental efforts. Sustainable production from forest resources and the conservation of biodiversity are assured by a forest working plan and a time-tested selective felling system. About 50 per cent of Myanmar's total land surface is still covered by natural forests. Even though the forest area is about 33 million hectares, the prescribed allowable annual cut is less than 3 million cubic metres for teak and other hardwoods. This volume of commercial extraction is significantly less than the volume harvested by other countries in the region.

The Government's current development activities in the forest sector include the special project for greening the nine driest districts of the country; extension of the area under reserved forests; the establishment of new plantations; overall reforestation of the dry zone to provide much-needed timber and fuel wood for rural communities; and measures to improve the watersheds.

Myanmar attaches high importance to population issues and recognizes the close link between population and sustainable development. We participated in the Cairo Conference, and we heartily welcome the adoption by consensus of a non-binding 20-year Programme of Action. Our population-policy focus is on voluntary birth-spacing to promote the health of mother and child. The Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association — a non-governmental organization — is actively carrying out its assigned task in this field.

Much has been accomplished by the United Nations in the field of human rights. The Organization's most recent accomplishment in this area is the appointment by consensus, at the General Assembly's last session, of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The appointment of such an important personage by consensus testifies to the fact that both the developed and the developing countries attach importance to the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. My delegation wishes the High Commissioner every success in carrying out his mandate.

As a responsible Member of the United Nations and as an unwavering advocate of the values that the Organization represents, the Union of Myanmar has always upheld and adhered to the basic norms of human rights, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As is confirmed by the Bangkok Declaration, the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs should be respected by all nations, and attempts to use human rights to encroach on the essentially domestic jurisdiction of States should be avoided.

In saying this we do not mean that human rights may be systematically violated behind the barrier of non-interference. We wish to see human rights promoted through cooperation and consensus-building, and not through the imposition of values that we do not share.

We believe that, even as we seek universality of human rights, we must never minimize or forget diversity in historical, cultural and religious backgrounds. We are also against double standards and the temptation to use human rights as a means of achieving political ends.

The right to sufficient food, clothing and shelter, the right to a decent quality of life and the right to live peacefully and in security are often neglected in the clamour for individual rights. At this delicate juncture in our history, when Myanmar is in the midst of transforming itself to a multi-party democracy with a market economy, the interests of its 45 million people as a whole must take precedence over the interests of any individual. Confrontation and incitement to unrest and instability have no place when the nation is in the process of reconciliation and reconsolidation.

In keeping with the aspirations of all the national races, Myanmar is also at present at the critical stage of drafting a firm constitution. My Government would certainly not like to see the present momentum of the constitutional process and the efforts for national reconciliation impeded in any way, nor can it allow a return to the chaos and anarchy of the incidents of 1988.

The Myanmar Government does not condone human rights abuses. In fact, it is totally against them. We have cooperated fully with the United Nations in every field and, in this regard, with the Commission on Human Rights by providing information in connection with communications and queries concerning the situation in Myanmar. Not only have we provided information sought by the Commission, but we have also received the Independent Experts and the Special Rapporteur appointed by the Commission on Human Rights. The Special Rapporteur, Mr. Yozo Yokota, was received in

1992 and in 1993. In deference to the United Nations and as a gesture of our goodwill and cooperation, we will receive him again this year.

The Memorandum of Understanding between Myanmar and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) signed on 5 November 1993, setting out UNHCR's role in Myanmar's border development projects, is an illustration of our steady cooperation with the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies. It is normal that some issues should arise from time to time between neighbouring States. In such cases, we always seek peaceful solutions based on mutual goodwill, respect and understanding. A case in point is the matter of transport and movement of people between Myanmar and Bangladesh across our common border. Although some quarters tried to exaggerate the situation by invoking potential regional destabilization, our two countries were able to resolve the situation in a spirit of mutual friendship and understanding resulting in the repatriation so far of nearly 70,000 returnees to their hearths and homes.

At the initiative of the Secretary-General, Myanmar decided to establish a dialogue with the United Nations to exchange views on various issues of common concern. I should like briefly to apprise the Assembly of the developments leading to this decision.

During his visit to Myanmar in March this year, Under-Secretary-General Mr. Rafeeudin Ahmed, Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), delivered a letter and a verbal message from the Secretary-General to Secretary I of the State Law and Order Restoration Council. The Secretary-General, in his letter, made constructive remarks in regard to the measures taken by the Myanmar Government and showed keen interest in the developments in Myanmar, particularly the process of national reconciliation and steps taken in drafting a firm constitution through the National Convention. The Secretary-General also expressed his desire to establish a dialogue with the Government of the Union of Myanmar to exchange views on the various issues with a view to considering how the United Nations could assist in facilitating continued progress towards the resolution of these issues. Secretary I, in his acknowledgment, informed the Secretary-General that a communication would be made on this subject in the near future.

While attending the Ministerial Meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in Bangkok, I transmitted, through the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand, on 21 July 1994, our initial response to the Secretary-General. Further to this response, the Myanmar Government informed the Executive Secretary of ESCAP that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar had been designated to initiate the dialogue proposed by the Secretary-General at a mutually agreeable date and, in this regard, sought his advice on the modalities of carrying out such a dialogue more fruitfully. I am happy to apprise the Assembly through you, Sir, that I had two meetings earlier this month with Mr. Marrack Goulding, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs of the United Nations, and that the dialogue between the Myanmar Government and the United Nations is now well under way.

The global spread of drug abuse has become a major international concern in recent years. The evil consequences of illicit drugs transcend borders and the threat of illicit drugs can be overcome only with effective international cooperation. We share the view that concerted action is needed at the national, subregional, regional and global levels.

Myanmar has always treated anti-narcotics measures as a national responsibility. At the national level, the Government has adopted comprehensive plans for the effective implementation of drug-suppression measures. A new law against narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was enacted in 1993, encompassing effective measures against the widening scope of the drug menace. In our national strategies against drugs, a new approach was launched in 1988, the key concept of which was to alleviate the poverty of the peoples of the border areas by providing them with a means of alternative income, while at the same time working to raise their awareness of the magnitude of human misery resulting from drugs. This approach is being carried out as one of the main objectives of our master plan for the development of the border areas and national races. It is evident that the most effective approach to the eradication of poppy cultivation would be to implement a comprehensive programme for the social and economic development of the national races in the border areas. We have now established a mechanism for coordinating action against illicit drugs in all their aspects.

We have also been coordinating our national efforts with those of our neighbours to ensure a maximum impact in drug eradication in the region. The Myanmar Government has signed agreements with the People's Republic of China and the United Nations International

Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), as well as with Thailand and the UNDCP. Bilateral narcotics-suppression agreements have been signed with Laos and India, and we aim to work out a similar agreement with Bangladesh. In October 1993, in New York, Myanmar, the People's Republic of China, Laos, Thailand and the UNDCP signed a Memorandum of Understanding which would further harmonize collective activities aimed at reducing drug trafficking and production, eliminating poppy cultivation and reducing drug demand and consumption. There have been two ministerial conferences at the subregional level in which Myanmar has actively participated. Myanmar is a State party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Moreover, on 7 June this year Myanmar deposited the instrument of accession to the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances. We are also carrying out a series of measures in implementation of the recommendations contained in the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly in February 1990.

Members of the Myanmar security forces are engaged in a relentless war against drug trafficking. They may not be wearing blue helmets like the men and women from different lands serving as guardians of peace under the United Nations banner, but the cause for which hundreds of them have sacrificed life and limb is no less internationalist and no less worthy. There are those who express doubt about our commitment to the eradication of narcotics, and I would ask them: "Which country in the world has sacrificed the lives of over 190 soldiers, with an additional 350 wounded, in the combat against drug traffickers in a matter of only four weeks?" With this serious dedication and commitment in the fight against illicit drugs, we in Myanmar are ready and willing to cooperate fully with all our neighbours and the international community for sustained efforts against this scourge.

Myanmar is a union of over 100 different national races residing there. Unity among the different national races is essential for the preservation of our independence and sovereignty as well as for the economic and social progress of our country. Since regaining independence in 1948, Myanmar unfortunately has had to face internal strife started by various armed groups. Because of this, the country has suffered immensely and lagged behind in economic development in comparison with other nations of the region. In these dire circumstances, it is only natural that the State Law and Order Restoration Council should attach the utmost importance to the preservation of independence and the strengthening of unity and national solidarity among all the national races of Myanmar. Since it assumed the responsibilities of the State, the State Law and Order Restoration Council has given priority to the achievement of national reconciliation.

Beginning in 1989, less than one year after it assumed responsibility, the Government made overtures to the armed groups to return to the legal fold. Since April 1992, the armed forces have suspended military offensives against the armed groups in the interest of national reconciliation. Over four decades of internal strife has not benefited anyone, but has only caused death and destruction and untold suffering for the people.

No one appreciates peace more than a soldier. It is therefore most gratifying that a total of 12 groups having trust in the sincerity of the Government's offer have returned to the legal fold and are working together with the Government for the development of their regions. These groups are also being provided with the opportunity to participate in the national political process — the National Convention — to shape the country's future. With the Shan State Nationalities Peoples' Liberation Organization, which returned to the legal fold on 9 October 1994, the armed groups in the reconciliation process now number 13. They will be integrated in the same manner as previous groups that are participating in the National Convention.

To the remaining groups that have yet to return to the legal fold, the Myanmar Government reiterates its call not to miss this golden opportunity but to join hands in building a peaceful, democratic and modern union. Guns have fallen silent in the country as never before in the history of modern Myanmar, and these groups should look at the greater interest of the country and work for the benefit of all the national races, in accordance with the proclamations they themselves have been making for so long.

At this juncture, let me turn to another aspect of the Government's objectives: the drafting of a firm and enduring constitution. Towards this end, a National Convention has been meeting since the beginning of last year to draft a new constitution. Consensus has already been reached on the 15 chapter headings for the 104 fundamental principles of the State and for the chapters on State, State structure and Head of State.

At the resumed session of the National Convention, which commenced on 2 September 1994, the Chairman of the National Convention Convening Work Committee elucidated the points relative to the matter of self-administered divisions or self-administered zones in the Union, and to constituting the legislative, executive and judicial branches for detailed discussions and deliberations among the delegates. As for those who allege that the process is moving too slowly, let me ask: Is the world today not full of examples where too much haste has led to chaos and confusion, even to armed conflict and the disintegration of nations?

At the same time, let me assure the Assembly that the State Law and Order Restoration Council has no intention of unnecessarily prolonging the process or causing delays. However, a balance must be struck between the need to reach consensus among the nearly 700 delegates on very urgent and vital issues, such as the national races, and the desire for the process to be completed in timely fashion. Anyone following these deliberations closely will realize that they lucidly give the lie to the allegations that the deliberations in the National Convention were orchestrated by the Government.

At the same time, I wish to indicate to certain observers that in our society reaching consensus is more important than debating who is right or wrong or who won the debate. We would like the constitution to reflect as much as possible the wishes of the national races, while at the same time we would be most happy if consensus on the remaining chapters could be reached as soon as possible. What the Government has done, and is doing at the moment, is to ensure peace, stability, law and order while striving for the economic development of the entire nation so that the transition to democracy will be smooth and tranquil.

Today the National Convention is in full session for further discussions on the fundamental principles to be enshrined in the new constitution. The very fact that the new State structure will be a union system is a manifestation of the consensus that has been reached by the Convention. The new Union of Myanmar that is envisaged by the National Convention will be a genuine multi-party, democratic State in order to bring the nation modernity, unity, stability, peace and harmony. The new constitution will have safeguards to guarantee non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

As in the case of other modern Constitutions, the three organs of government - the legislative, executive and judicial — will be properly constituted and separated as much as possible and will be able to exert reciprocal control with checks and balances among themselves. Among the fundamental principles already laid down, independent administration of justice in accordance with the law, administration of justice in public except where restricted by law, the right to defence and the right of appeal will be guaranteed. Furthermore, there will be constitutional remedies, and the Supreme Court will have the power to issue writs.

Citizens will be able to enjoy the rule of law, which is the fundamental legal safeguard necessary for a democratic State. Because of the separation of powers envisaged in the new constitution, the judiciary will be the ultimate guardian of fundamental rights. Freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of belief, freedom of worship, freedom to seek a livelihood and freedom of organization will be guaranteed. There will be equality of status, equality of opportunity and equality before the law.

The entire Myanmar nation is currently engaged in our national endeavour to establish a truly democratic and modern society in accordance with the aspirations of our people. We the people of the Union of Myanmar are doing our utmost to advance the ongoing political and constitutional process and the current programme of national economic development in the interest of all our national brethren.

We have a popular saying in Myanmar:

> "As we sow in our deeds, so shall we surely reap in our future destiny."

We are therefore fully confident that, with continued dedication, determination and diligence in our national endeavour, we will surely be able to successfully establish a democratic society based on the universal values of justice, liberty and equality.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zambia, His Excellency the Honourable Mr. Remmy Mushota.

Mr. Mushota (Zambia): Let me join the representatives who have spoken before me in congratulating you, Sir, on your unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth

session. You represent a country, Côte d'Ivoire, which has played and continues to play an active role in the framework of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and in the United Nations. You bring to the presidency vast experience in the area of international relations as well as diplomatic skill and acumen, which puts you in good stead to steer the deliberations of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion. You can count on my delegation's unqualified support and cooperation.

I also wish to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who presided over the work of the forty-eighth session with great distinction and rare personal attributes.

Mr. Blandino Canto (Dominican Republic), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Our distinguished Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has continued to provide outstanding leadership in the discharge of his duties. Zambia is particularly grateful to the Secretary-General for his untiring efforts in pursuit of world peace and security, development and international cooperation.

The past year has been one of mixed blessings on the international scene, a year of notable achievements and failures. In the view of Zambia, the most positive development of the year was the achievement of majority rule in the Republic of South Africa. My delegation is really delighted to see in our midst the delegation of a democratic and non-racial South Africa, led by President Nelson Mandela. President Mandela was the symbol of the liberation struggle in South Africa and it is therefore befitting that he, an icon of the liberation struggle, should become the first President of a new South Africa.

The return of South Africa to the family of the United Nations is without a doubt due to the tenacity, uncompromising commitment and dedication of our brothers and sisters in South Africa who bore the brunt of the evil system of apartheid. At the same time, it cannot be denied that South Africa's victory over apartheid and its rejoining the United Nations is a concrete manifestation of the seminal role played by this Organization.

In order to consolidate the democracy achieved in South Africa and address the negative social and economic legacy of apartheid, substantial international assistance is imperative. In this regard, Zambia endorses the appeal made by President Nelson Mandela for international support to South Africa to enable the effective implementation of its reconstruction and development programme.

A democratic, peaceful and prosperous South Africa will no doubt have a positive impact on southern Africa and the African continent as a whole. Indeed, South Africa's contribution as a member of the Southern African Development Community has already begun to be felt and appreciated. It has, together with Botswana and Zimbabwe, also played a highly commendable role in the peaceful resolution of the constitutional problem in Lesotho. We have every confidence, therefore, that South Africa will contribute positively to the work of the United Nations.

Africa has had a few other bright spots. We are delighted with the peaceful resolution of the territorial dispute between Chad and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The positive developments in Burundi towards a peaceful resolution of the long-standing conflict are commendable. However, the situation remains volatile. There is therefore a need to sustain international engagement.

With regard to Angola, it is indeed gratifying that the talks between the Government of Angola and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), which have been taking place in Lusaka, Zambia, for the past eleven months under the chairmanship of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, have made tremendous progress. We therefore look forward to a successful conclusion of the talks by the end of October, culminating in the signing of a peace agreement, by the middle of November 1994, on the basis of the Bicesse Accords, and the pertinent resolutions of the Security Council.

In this regard, we take this opportunity to commend both the Angolan Government and the UNITA delegation for their seriousness and commitment to the task of finding a peaceful solution to their country's fratricidal war. We also thank the observers to these talks, namely the United States, the Russian Federation and Portugal. Sustained international assistance to Angola will be necessary in the post-agreement era and Zambia will continue to assist the people of Angola during this period.

In Mozambique, we look forward to the holding of the first multiparty elections, scheduled to take place on 27 and 28 October. We commend the Mozambican Government and RENAMO for committing themselves to

the United Nations peace initiative and to the Rome Agreement. We applaud the role that the United Nations has played through its peace-keeping efforts and in helping to prepare the people of Mozambique for the forthcoming elections. As a gesture of solidarity with the people of Mozambique, Zambia has made a modest contribution to the United Nations peace-keeping operation.

In Malawi, we welcome the recent peaceful and democratic transition to a multiparty system of government. We endorse the appeal made by President Bakili Muluzi for international assistance to consolidate democracy and to assist in the reconstruction of the country. My Government also commends the technical and advisory services provided by the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat of the United Nations.

Zambia welcomes the positive trend towards democratization on the African continent. Why should Africa democratize? Africa should democratize because it is our firm belief that democratic systems of government promote good governance, transparency and accountability in the administration of public affairs, independence of the judiciary, and respect for human rights and the rule of law. These qualities lay a firm basis for peace and stability and are thus conducive to sustainable development. We would therefore urge all of our development partners to take account of all these positive developments in the formulation of their development policies towards Africa. They should also endeavour to explain to their taxpayers the significance of these democratic changes and their correlation to sustainable development. The electorates of the North must be made to appreciate that it is in their enlightened self-interest to support developing countries. There is now much hope in Africa. Indeed, Africa, in the long run, holds the promise of a positive and prosperous future.

In the Middle East, we welcome the positive developments in Palestine following the agreements and declarations between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, as well as between Jordan and Israel. It is our sincere hope that progress can also be achieved in the negotiations with the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. International assistance is urgently required for the reconstruction, rehabilitation and other essential needs of the Palestinians.

We commend the efforts deployed by the leadership of the PLO and of Israel, their tenacity and their determination to work for peace. We also commend the crucial catalytic roles played by the United States of America and the Russian Federation as co-sponsors of the talks. The Kingdom of Norway also deserves our gratitude for its contribution to the peace talks. The sustained support and commitment of the Arab League to the peace process also merit special mention.

On the other hand, negative developments abound in Africa and elsewhere on the international scene. These conflict situations continue to defy durable solutions through dialogue, reconciliation and negotiation, in stark contrast with the exemplary cases I have just cited.

Thus, in our region, the civil wars in Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia and the Sudan torment us all because of our aversion to fratricidal and ethnic violence and the serious humanitarian crises they have engendered. In this connection, Zambia also strongly condemns ethnic violence wherever it occurs, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We deplore the further deterioration of the situation in Liberia. We regret the lack of progress towards disarmament, demobilization and general elections. We appeal to all the parties to commit themselves to the Cotonou and Akosombo Peace Agreements. We also wish to stress the need to maintain the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG) in Liberia and to provide it with the requisite logistical support.

As for Rwanda, we and the entire world community have been deeply shocked by the genocide and the most dehumanizing spectre of violence in that country, resulting in one of the worst humanitarian and refugee crises in the history of mankind. Zambia has expressed its strong condemnation of the genocide and mindless violence in Rwanda. We strongly feel that those responsible for the massacres must be brought to trial through an international tribunal. Conditions of peace, security, stability and confidence should be created in Rwanda in order to facilitate the repatriation of refugees from overburdened neighbouring countries. We hope that the new Government will commit itself to carrying out its declared intention to work for reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction in Rwanda. Substantial assistance for humanitarian, rehabilitation and reconstruction purposes is thus crucial. The neighbouring asylum countries also need assistance.

The role and efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in creating conditions of stability and security in the country are

crucial. We therefore deeply regret the delay in the deployment of UNAMIR troops to the level of 5,500 in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. In this regard, African countries have been ready and willing to send sufficient troops. However, the major constraint has been inadequate logistical support.

As a token measure, Zambia has contributed a peace-keeping contingent of civilian and military personnel to the UNAMIR operation, thanks to the generous logistical support, in materiel, from the Netherlands. Furthermore, the Zambian Peace Corps, a non-governmental organization, has organized activities to raise funds to purchase medicines, food and other humanitarian requirements for the displaced people in Rwanda.

We remain concerned by the continuing crisis in Somalia and by the lack of progress. We note, however, the genuine efforts being deployed to resolve the crisis. Notwithstanding the difficulties, we strongly believe that the continued presence of the United Nations in Somalia is critical.

In Sudan, the continuing civil war and factional fighting in the south and the deteriorating human rights situation nationwide are a cause of serious concern to us in Zambia. We urge the parties to reach a negotiated settlement.

As to Haiti, Zambia reaffirms its support for the efforts of the Organization of American States and the United Nations to restore democracy and respect for human rights there, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

With regard to Cuba, we reaffirm our belief that the time has come for the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba to be lifted. We hope that our two friends the United States and Cuba will resolve their differences peacefully. In this regard, we are encouraged by the recent dialogue between the two countries.

Zambia attaches great importance to the role of regional organizations in addressing conflict situations. In this respect we note with satisfaction the increasingly active role played by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), including at regional and subregional levels, to address the root causes of conflicts and to prevent, manage and resolve them.

In particular, in June of last year the OAU established a mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in order for Africa to deal effectively with conflict situations on its own. For too long and too often, Africa has relied on external assistance to resolve its conflicts. The time has come for Africa to handle these situations resolutely. Conflicts continue to sap Africa's energies, to waste its scarce resources and to retard its development. They must be eliminated in order to create an environment conducive to economic and social development.

Zambia therefore appeals to the international community to contribute generously to the OAU Fund established to sustain the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. International support is critical to the effective implementation of this important initiative. It is warranted by the fact that the United Nations, through the Security Council, exercises primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is now evident that peace and development not only are interrelated but are indivisible. This has been brought into prominence by the comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General entitled "Agenda for Peace" and "Agenda for Development". Indeed, in a number of conflict situations poverty and deprivation have been the underlying causes. There is, therefore, a compelling case to bring development and related issues to the centre stage of the United Nations, in order to promote the cause of peace in its most comprehensive perspective.

We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's preliminary report on the "Agenda for Development". My delegation fully supports the views of the Group of 77 on this subject, as reflected in its Ministerial Declaration of 30 September 1994. In particular, an Agenda for Development must be action-oriented and focus on the economic growth and development of the developing countries, especially the least developed amongst them. The Agenda for Development must strengthen the role of the United Nations in the area of international economic policy-making and coordination.

Africa is in economic crisis. It continues to face grave economic difficulties. Africa therefore needs a favourable international economic environment for the promotion of investment flows, increased official development assistance, technological transfer, improved trade opportunities and better terms of trade. Africa further needs a viable and comprehensive solution for its

huge debt burden. Such a debt strategy should include debt cancellation. In this regard, we fully support the positions of the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Zambia welcomes the conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the Agreement to establish the World Trade Organization (WTO) with effect from January of next year. It is our expectation that the World Trade Organization will promote a non-discriminatory and predictable trading system and protect the rights and interests of the developing countries.

In view of the increasing economic disparity between the developed and the developing countries, the WTO will not start on a level playing field. In this connection, it is the strong view of my delegation that the implementation of the Uruguay Round must be monitored constantly to ensure that the interests of developing countries are adequately protected. Compensation should be provided to those developing countries that are facing difficulties, particularly the least developed.

Let me now address Zambia's economic and political situation. On the economic front, we have followed, resolutely, a credible macro-economic reform programme whose main objective is to promote growth with stability based on an equitable allocation of resources. The main policy thrusts of the programme include strict control of the money supply and credit, with the aim of keeping inflation to minimal levels; liberalization of the economy with greater reliance on market forces; and implementation of the privatization programme, through which previously State-owned enterprises are to be turned into private concerns in order to reduce direct Government participation in the economy.

Although these measures are expected to yield positive results in the long run, they have had some short-term negative effects, such as a drastic reduction in employment levels in the formal sector, a decline in income level, and a marked increase in both the level and the intensity of poverty, especially in the rural areas and among the vulnerable segments of the population. To cushion the poor from these adverse effects of economic adjustment, a social safety net has been created to assist those who lose their jobs or who are unable to meet their basic needs or obtain social services. It is going to be a long haul, but the Zambian Government is determined to rise above these challenges.

I should be remiss if I did not express gratitude to all our development partners for the economic, financial and technical support rendered to our country. The support provided Zambia by our development partners will serve to underpin our structural adjustment programme, to which our Government remains committed. More importantly, such assistance will help to consolidate our democratization process, which we initiated in 1991 with the reintroduction of plural politics. In this regard, my delegation is pleased to assure the international community that Zambia's democratization process remains firmly on course.

There is a strong connection between the plan of action adopted at the Cairo Conference on Population, the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen early next year, and the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, next September. The World Summit on Social Development will be an opportunity for the international community to renew its commitment and political will to effectively address a number of social and economic problems.

The contribution made by women to development efforts is very clear, although it is often underestimated. We therefore look forward to Beijing's programme of action, which we trust will ensure the full and equal participation of women at all levels of human activity.

With regard to the environment, the international community is faced with the major challenge of giving practical effect to the concept of sustainable development as reflected in Agenda 21. To do this, effective international cooperation is vital. In particular, practical steps must be taken to provide access to appropriate technologies and to mobilize new and additional financial resources for the countries in need: the developing countries. My delegation therefore calls on the developed countries to fulfil the solemn commitments undertaken at the Rio Earth Summit. At the same time, the task at hand is global and must thus be shared globally. It involves individuals, community groups, non-governmental organizations, Governments and financial institutions. In the language of the Earth Summit, "common but differentiated responsibilities" (A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I) Principle 7) is now imperative.

Zambia attaches high priority to environmental issues. As a reflection of our commitment, we have formulated a National Environmental Action Plan aimed at integrating environmental concerns into our socio-economic development plans. We have taken deliberate measures to increase the level of public awareness of environmental issues, particularly through

the active involvement of non-governmental organizations and community groups.

My Government is firmly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that it is the duty and responsibility of all Governments to do so, regardless of their political, economic or cultural systems.

In the aftermath of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, we should work to implement its important recommendations. Accordingly, my delegation will support genuine efforts in this direction during the current session. My delegation welcomes the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the appointment of Mr. José Ayala Lasso to this high office. Mr. Lasso has already proven his suitability for the appointment, and we commend his important initiatives concerning human rights situations in Africa and elsewhere. My delegation also supports the strengthening of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Geneva.

My Government has also established a Human Rights Commission, which is responsible for investigating alleged human rights violations in Zambia, including those committed prior to the reintroduction of plural politics in 1991. In the spirit of our policy of transparency, the Government will publish the Commission's findings in a report to be made available to the general public. Zambia is thus firmly committed to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to other relevant international covenants and instruments.

In the area of disarmament and arms control, my delegation strongly supports efforts to accelerate the elimination of nuclear weapons and to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We also fully support the review and extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which is scheduled to take place next year. However, we share the view that any extension of the NPT should be linked to progress on nuclear disarmament and to the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Zambia welcomes the significant progress achieved in the Geneva negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We further support the case for a convention on conventional weapons and welcome the introduction of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms with a view to promoting transparency and confidence-building.

Zambia welcomes the successful conclusion during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, of the agreement relating to the implementation of part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which opened the way for the universal acceptance of the Convention and its provisions.

Let me now turn to the United Nations itself. As we meet in this session on the threshold of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, we have to recognize that the fundamental meaning of the United Nations Charter has remained unchanged; that the United Nations has undergone periods of both triumph and disillusionment; that the United Nations is still an international organization for the people as well as of the people and it is therefore supposed to be a democratic institution. It is now time to reflect on a United Nations that will serve mankind for another 50 years after 1995. It will have to be a new United Nations, one which will suit the exigencies of the twenty-first century. It will be necessary to sharpen the mechanisms that were established to give effect to the declared principles and purposes of the Charter. It is only by going through this metamorphosis that our Organization will be able to adapt to a changed and changing environment, to new demands, new opportunities and new challenges.

In this connection, my delegation is of the considered view that expansion of the membership of the Security Council is extremely important. Regions of the world, such as Africa, that are not represented at the level of permanent membership should be so represented. It will, therefore, be incumbent upon those regions to agree on which country or countries should represent them as permanent members.

Apart from dealing with the Security Council, we must fashion the United Nations in such a way as to accord a central role to issues of the development of the developing countries. The Economic and Social Council should therefore be attuned to meeting this challenge. We would like to see a stronger Economic and Social Council with a mandate adequate to coordinate the policies of all development programmes and activities, as well as the activities of the specialized agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, for the promotion of sustained economic growth and development.

We now live in a world in which there has been a major recasting of international relations ranging from political to economic, environmental to humanitarian issues. In this new atmosphere, the United Nations is the linchpin of our collective security, the repository of our

hope for progress and prosperity. In this atmosphere, the United Nations has no greater contribution to make in the service of its ideals than to help the world find its way from the era of fear from which we are emerging into a time of hope and progress for all mankind.

We wish this great creation more success for the betterment of the entire world.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I call next on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency The Honourable Ralph Maraj.

Mr. Maraj (Trinidad and Tobago): I should like to offer congratulations and special greetings to Ambassador Essy on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly. I am confident that under his able leadership this session of the General Assembly is well placed to address successfully the important issues on its agenda.

Allow me to express appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally for his wise and effective guidance during the session just concluded. He has indeed made an outstanding contribution, of which our region is very proud.

We express our thanks to the Secretary-General for his stewardship of the Organization during these trying times, and we renew our pledge to give him our fullest support.

Trinidad and Tobago, like the rest of the world, is in the process of making fundamental changes in the way we manage our affairs. We have already advanced significantly along the path of deregulation and liberalization brought upon us by the inexorable move towards globalization and borderlessness, and most importantly by the absolute necessity to achieve greater efficiency and higher sustainable levels of productivity. Greater emphasis is being placed on the market paradigm as the means to unleash the inner energies of our society and to create the wealth needed for the improvement of the lives of all our citizens.

But let me hasten to add that we are acutely aware of the imbalances that could arise as a result of the purest play of market forces, and we as a society consider it our responsibility to ensure that distributive justice exists in our system, sufficiently to guarantee the well-being of all of our citizens, including those who are unable to compete and who for one reason or another may have been pushed out of the mainstream of national activity. In other words, whilst many things may be changing, there is one constant in Trinidad and Tobago, and that is our preservation of a humane and just society where all have the opportunity for fulfilment.

Side by side with the globalization process, or maybe as a byproduct of it, is a resurgence of regionalism throughout the world. In our own hemisphere this is very pronounced, and the dream of a free trade area from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego seems more realizable than ever before. We are pleased to see various subregional groupings emerge and then develop relationships with one another. Never before in the history of our hemisphere has the integration process been so advanced. We have the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Andean Pact, the Central American Integration Movement, the Latin American Economic System (SELA), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Rio Group, in addition of course to the Organization of American States. It is significant that the cooperation which is flowering is not only economic but also political; this augurs very well for the development as well as for the security of the hemisphere.

In addition to this multilateral coalescence, there is a general strengthening of bilateral relationships. We in CARICOM have been making strides towards overcoming historical barriers and have been deepening our ties with Latin America. My own country, having this year established diplomatic relations with six countries of Latin America, now has diplomatic relations with all the countries of the western hemisphere. Also, we joined 38 others, including both independent countries and non-independent Territories, in establishing the Association of Caribbean States, comprising countries of the Caribbean littoral and bringing into being a market of over 200 million people with a combined gross domestic product of $500 billion.

We do all this for the benefit of our people, realizing that when we join forces we are stronger, we lay the bedrock for a stable environment within the hemisphere, and we create, among other things, megamarkets for our products and generate the wealth through which we improve the standard of living in our countries.

I have spoken about the possibilities for political co-operation as a result of the integration processes

taking place in our region. May I mention an outstanding current example. I refer of course to Haiti. At present in Haiti, sanctioned by Security Council resolution 940 (1994), is a multinational force comprised mainly of troops from the region, with military contributions from elsewhere. My Government welcomes the cooperation extended by countries outside the region whose farsightedness persuaded them to contribute to the restoration process now taking place in Haiti.

In the changed circumstances of today's world, there is more than ever a need to cooperate for security purposes and for the preservation of democracy, and this of course requires the political will which has been demonstrated by our region in the Haitian situation. Soldiers from Trinidad and Tobago are part of the multinational force at present in Haiti. We are pleased to participate in the collective efforts to ensure stability and the return of democracy and the democratically elected President to that country. We believe that the Caribbean has a special responsibility in relation to Haiti. We have therefore been in the forefront of attempts to solve the crisis, and we vow to remain with the problem until it is no more with us.

Trinidad and Tobago joins the jubilation of the millions of proud Haitians at home and in the diaspora at the welcome news of the resignation of General Raoul Cedras and his Chief of Staff. Like others, we hope this sends an unequivocal message to those elements in Haiti that seek to continue to wage war and terror against a people still yearning for a society of freedom, democracy and justice - a society in which the collective talents and resourcefulness of Haitians can be appropriately channelled towards rebuilding their nation and fighting the enemies of poverty and degradation.

Another area of Caribbean concern has to do with Cuba. We welcome the commencement of dialogue between Cuba and the United States of America on specific issues. These talks should assist in laying a foundation for the resolution of remaining difficulties and in achieving the long-term objective of fully reintegrating Cuba into the Western Hemisphere. We in the Caribbean are doing our part towards the goal of Cuba's reintegration. We have established the Cuba-Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Mixed Commission, and recently Cuba joined us as a founding member of the Association of Caribbean States.

Trinidad and Tobago also welcomes the consolidation of democracy in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Peaceful elections continue to be conducted in these countries, deepening the democratic process in the region.

We are pleased with the many positive developments in our part of the world. There have also been positive developments in former areas of conflict which seized the attention of this body for many years, further illustrating what can be achieved through partnership and political will. The peaceful transition to democracy in South Africa a few months ago stands out as a beacon of hope and signals that no problem is insurmountable if there is concerted national and international action. Trinidad and Tobago joins with the international community in assuring South Africa of its continued support in this crucial post-apartheid period. The Government of South Africa has announced its decision to include among its priorities the continuation of traditional friendships and the promotion of new partnerships. We look forward to the development of strong bilateral relations between South Africa and ourselves, a process that is already under way.

Trinidad and Tobago is also heartened by the progress achieved so far in the Middle East peace process. We welcome the initiation of self-governing arrangements in the Gaza Strip and Jericho - important developments in this transition period - and look forward to the extension of Palestinian self-governing arrangements to encompass other occupied territories in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles. The international community's support for development efforts in the economic and social fields and the rebuilding of infrastructure destroyed during the long years of occupation is critical to the Palestinian people at this time.

We are encouraged by the Washington Declaration of 25 July 1994, issued by the Governments of Jordan and Israel, which ended the state of war and paves the way for normalization of relations and a formal peace treaty. We also appreciate the efforts made by the Syrian and Lebanese Governments in their commitment to advancing the peace process in the Middle East.

Whilst there is cause for satisfaction globally, we continue to be traumatized by other events which have already shattered the lives of millions of people, evoking images more horrendous than those we have witnessed before. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a genocidal war rages on, having already brought the evil of "ethnic cleansing" into our modern vocabulary and consciousness. We were first appalled and are now numbed by the horror in Rwanda, where hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost, creating hellish human suffering in that country. Destruction, oppression and

suffering continue in various parts of the world, affecting hundreds of thousands of lives in Somalia and elsewhere.

Nuclear proliferation makes us all very uneasy, creating pictures of an abyss of unspeakable chaos into which we can very easily slip. The ideological divide may be behind us, but the threat of Armageddon still hangs over humanity.

It has become a cliché of international helplessness to say that the world community must act decisively and expeditiously to do this or that to deal with many of the problems that I have mentioned. The fact is that there is a very long road ahead. To effect lasting solutions to the crises that are upon us we must go back always to the fundamentals and remember, for example, that development and peace are inextricably linked. If we are to get anywhere near to solving some of our problems we must deal with key issues such as good governance, the promotion of peace, the promotion of justice as a pillar of society, sustainable environmental management and social development.

There is no doubt in my mind that the world community is already beginning to grapple with fundamentals. We are in the process of elaborating the Agenda for Development as a necessary complement to the "Agenda for Peace". International conferences of world leaders, some held and others to come, all point the way to a new partnership for development based on global consensus and action.

In this regard, the World Summit for Social Development will be convened in March 1995 in Denmark to address some of the serious ills afflicting many societies by focusing on the key problems of poverty, unemployment and social marginalization. The programme of action to be adopted at the social Summit must therefore include specific provisions, including adequate financial resources for implementation and follow-up by the international community and, more specifically, by the United Nations and its agencies and institutions.

There can be no doubt that the quality of life in many countries today as it relates to the individual is undergoing a grave transformation. The growing intolerance and increasing senseless violence within the home and in communities at large have led many to question the very mores of the society in which we live. The situation is further aggravated by the growth of organized transnational crime, which in many countries exacerbates problems of rampant vicious criminal activity, terrorism, drug abuse, illegal drug trafficking and money laundering.

In this era of increasing globalization, no Government, particularly Governments in the developing world, can hope, on its own, to address effectively these varied problems. We therefore welcome the approval by the International Law Commission earlier this year of a draft statute for an international criminal court and we support the convening of a diplomatic conference to conclude a convention on the establishment of a permanent court.

Another important area being tackled by the international community is the full participation of women in the process of development. The fact is, effective international cooperation for development will remain elusive, in the absence of specific measures for an adequate means of empowering all members of society to participate fully in the political, economic and social life of their respective societies. It is widely acknowledged that investment in women can have an enormous impact on the advancement of society as a whole. However, women from all parts of the globe continue to face systematic discrimination in all fields of endeavour, while also bearing a disproportionate burden of the consequences of economic recession, poverty, structural adjustment policies and political strife.

In acknowledging this, Trinidad and Tobago has put in place constitutional guarantees to ensure equal treatment for all under the law, irrespective of gender, creed or race. My Government holds steadfastly to the position that women must be allowed equal opportunity to participate fully in all spheres of life and at all levels of society, particularly in decision-making positions.

Trinidad and Tobago is encouraged by efforts made during the ongoing preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women to address these and other crucial issues. Much work remains to be done in the ensuing months. My Government will continue to work closely with others in an effort to elaborate concrete recommendations, including specific attainable goals, aimed at overcoming the numerous impediments to the advancement of women.

The population question also continues to be on the international agenda. It is recognized that population-related goals and policies must be integral parts of cultural, economic and social development aimed at improving the quality of life. Consequently, the

International Conference on Population and Development, which was convened in Cairo last September, quite appropriately reviewed the impact of demographic factors on development and emphasized the importance of the entire spectrum of population policies to the development process. We must now take concrete steps to uphold the principles and implement the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference.

The crucial area of the environment is also being discussed. Member States have taken initial steps at the national and international levels, towards the elaboration of a new development paradigm based on the integration of environmental concerns in development activities. The continuation of this process would lead to the implementation of the policies and decisions adopted at Rio de Janeiro, thereby making possible the attainment of the targets identified for our common good.

As a follow-up to the Rio de Janeiro Conference, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which was held in Barbados earlier this year, allowed island States and the rest of the international community to explore a comprehensive approach to sustainable development within the framework of Agenda 21. For many island developing States which have remained on the periphery of international programmes for development, the implementation of the agreements adopted in Barbados will create the opportunity to participate as contributors and beneficiaries in a truly global effort. As Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States, Trinidad and Tobago reiterates its commitment to playing a lead role in the active pursuit of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action.

The preservation and sustainable management of the resources in all global commons must be an important goal of the Agenda for Development. But this goal must be facilitated by the development of legal regimes to ensure that we successfully carry out our duties as trustees of those resources.

In this context, Trinidad and Tobago welcomes the imminent entry into force of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, having participated very actively with other Member States in forging a new, more universally accepted public order for the oceans. The spirit of accommodation and consensus manifested in the work achieved by the Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea constitutes a solid and valuable foundation for the launching of the International Seabed Authority in Kingston, Jamaica, on 16 November 1994. Trinidad and Tobago will continue to participate constructively and in close cooperation with other Member States in the decision-making process of the Authority as well as in other institutions related to the 1982 Convention.

The coming into force of the Convention on the Law of the Sea should provide an impetus to the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, which is developing principles for the effective management of one of the most important renewable food resources. This objective can be attained only if there is a confluence of political will to act decisively.

Political will is also absolutely necessary if we are to address adequately the various international economic impediments to effective national efforts to promote social progress and better standards of life. The major obstacles include trade barriers, insufficient flows of international financing, onerous external debt and the inadequate transfer of technology to developing countries. They serve to frustrate the ardent efforts made by Governments to revitalize their economies.

Trinidad and Tobago welcomes the important step taken earlier this year towards free and open trade, with the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations. We emphasize, however, that as we seek to implement the trade liberalization measures under the agreements arrived at, urgent attention must be given to the persistent trend of economic growth accompanied by increased poverty, unemployment and marginalization of large sections of populations the world over.

It is clear from what I have said that it is only through a multilateral approach that we will solve the problems of the world. Clearly, the most appropriate vehicle to accommodate this approach is the United Nations. People are turning increasingly to the United Nations not only for the realization of their aspirations for peace and security, but also in their quest for development with equity and social justice. Following the dissipation of the distrust and hostility of the cold-war era, the United Nations ought to be in a better position to respond to these needs.

On becoming a Member of the United Nations 32 years ago, Trinidad and Tobago undertook along with other Member States to maintain international peace and

security and to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples. To this end we intend to participate actively in current efforts to restructure the United Nations to enable it to become more responsive to the needs of Member States in this dynamic international environment.

As the United Nations is on the threshold of celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to recommit itself to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. As Members, we need to redouble our efforts towards forging universal peace and a new era of development, in which both nations and individuals find security and fulfilment. I am confident that inherent in the human condition is the desire and the will to achieve these goals.

Address by Mr. Mikhail Chygir, Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus.

Mr. Mikhail Chygir, Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus, Mr. Mikhail Chygir, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Chygir (Belarus) *(interpretation from Russian):* Let me congratulate Mr. Amara Essy on his unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. This is both a tribute to his country's contribution to the work of the Organization and an acknowledgement of his personal achievements in multilateral diplomacy.

Almost half a century ago, the founding Member States — and my country is one of them — set for the United Nations a task of paramount importance: to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security and to promote the economic and social development of all nations. It was necessary to create a mechanism for coordinating states' efforts that could offer mutually acceptable solutions to international problems. Experience has shown that the United Nations can play the part of such a unique mechanism. Thanks to the great efforts of this prestigious international Organization, we have managed to avoid military flare-ups and conflicts in many parts of the world.

The world has changed dramatically. The political, ideological and military confrontation of two social systems has become a thing of the past. The ice of the cold war has melted away completely. These changes brought to the world hopes for a better future but, unfortunately, have failed to solve all international problems. Tragedies whose underlying cause is ethnic, religious and national enmity are being played out in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nagorny Karabakh, Abkhazia and Tajikistan. Unsettled bilateral relations between some States, including those relating to the areas of human rights and protection of national minorities, are also factors. And there is also terrorism, drug-trafficking and uncontrolled arms exports, including arms supplies into areas of conflict and hot spots in countries where bloodshed continues.

Under these circumstances, the role of the United Nations as a universally recognized uniter of peoples becomes much more significant. I am deeply convinced that there will come a time when the collective reason of the United Nations will have a much greater impact on the processes taking place in the world. Our duty is to do everything we can to achieve that. Here in the United Nations, we have to find the answers to many questions of concern to our countries.

For Belarus, this is especially important. For four years now Belarus has been building a democratic, independent and sovereign State. Our ideal is one of a free citizen in a free country. After decades of totalitarianism and sham collectivism, we are gradually giving back to our people freedom, which the great humanist Leonardo da Vinci called the main gift of nature.

One significant milestone in the life of Belarus was the adoption of a new Constitution and — a historic first for us — truly free and democratic presidential elections. Henceforth Belarus has a President elected by the people, Alaksandr Lukashenka, who has testified to his basic commitment to progressive market reforms. Presidential power and the trust of the people guarantee that democratic reforms in our country will be irreversible. And today we also have regular elections to the Belarus Parliament and for local authorities.

In foreign policy, the Republic of Belarus believes in the principles of sovereign equality of states, non-use

of force or the threat of force, inviolability of borders, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in internal affairs and other universally recognized norms of international law. Our Constitution contains a provision that Belarus should be a neutral State and its territory a nuclear-free zone. Our Republic is ready to cooperate with the whole world and is seeking its rightful place in Europe in the regional structures of collective security and economic cooperation.

The President and the Government of the Republic of Belarus believe that implementation of market reforms will guarantee success in the democratic transformations in our society. We have embarked on this path firmly and irreversibly. The legal and organizational bases for moving to the socially oriented market economy have now been created in the Republic. Appropriate legislation has been enacted. The ideas of having a state of law, dividing power into different branches and improving the system of executive authority are now being put into practice.

However, as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, transition to a market economy is very difficult. Our greatest difficulties occur in privatization, fighting monopolies and stabilizing the monetary-financial system. Moreover, we inherited from the past a national economic structure in which an excessively large share was given to the military-industrial complex. Internal and external national debt is also high, leading to budget deficits and inflation.

The situation is aggravated by the long-term consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The adverse effect of the unprecedented radioactive contamination on people's health is not decreasing. On the contrary, it increases as this tragic day recedes. On top of all of this, we had a drought this year the likes of which our country had not seen for at least 100 years. Modest estimates put the overall damage from the drought at more than $300 million.

Under these difficult circumstances, the Republic has elaborated a programme of measures for pulling the economy out of crisis. This programme will be the basis for an agreement with the International Monetary Fund, which we plan to sign sometime next month. Firmly resolved to carry out wide-scale reforms, we intend to curb inflation, reduce the budget deficit and reduce the deficit in the balance of payments. Full liberalization of trade and prices, speeding up privatization, should, we think, make it possible to lessen the crisis in our economy. Relying on our own forces, we nevertheless understand that without support from the outside we cannot carry out our reforms fully and in a reasonably short time.

The Republic of Belarus does not intend to withdraw into its own problems. We are open to the concerns, anxieties and problems of the whole world, and we wish to make our own contribution to the activities of the world community of nations. Not just rhetorically, but in reality, Belarus was the first State in history voluntarily, without reservations or conditions, to renounce the possession of nuclear weapons. We support proposals on the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In 1990, from this rostrum, the delegation of the Republic of Belarus put forward the idea of establishing a nuclear-free belt from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Recent steps taken by Belarus to withdraw nuclear weapons from its territory ahead of schedule make it possible to consider a substantial part of this region as nuclear-free territory already.

Belarus supports the efforts by Members of the United Nations to speed up the negotiations on concluding a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. We believe such a treaty could be signed as early as next year. We also support the proposal made here to elaborate a treaty on nuclear security and strategic stability. And, of course, we advocate multilateral discussion of issues relating to regulating the international arms market and military equipment.

I would like to stress that, despite our economic crisis, our Republic is endeavouring to comply fully with our obligations to reduce nuclear and conventional weapons, even though this requires enormous additional expenditures. In this connection, we feel we can expect the international community to support our actions.

The noble quest of peoples for peace following the Second World War led to the establishment of the United Nations. The people of Belarus paid a great price in delivering of world from fascism. The deadly fires of war scorched our land and touched literally every family in it. The tragic price of freedom was the life of every fourth citizen in my country. Not until 25 years after the war did our population once again attain its pre-war level. Thus, the General Assembly's decision to make 1995 the United Nations year of tolerance and to proclaim it the world year of commemoration of victims of the Second World War evokes a particularly profound response in Belarus. The Belarus delegation also

considers that next year would be the appropriate time to delete from the United Nations Charter the outdated concept of the "enemy State".

We must use the forthcoming United Nations golden jubilee to seek new ways of improving our performance in the changed world conditions. It is a truism that nature cannot tolerate rigidity and that everything in nature is constantly changing. That law is certainly applicable to the United Nations. If the Organization is to work effectively, its major organs must undergo profound reform.

In the application of the principle of representation of countries and regions in the Security Council, the interests of all groups of States, including the Eastern European Group, must be taken more fully into account. Of course, no Security Council reform should detract from its role as the body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, so needed by all Member States, and particularly the smaller States.

The Government of the Republic of Belarus has reacted positively to the proposal to increase the number of permanent members of the Security Council with the addition of members selected from among the countries that make an exceptional contribution to achieving the purposes of the United Nations Charter.

We believe that greater account should be taken of existing realities, including the complex problems confronting countries whose economies are in transition and the poorest countries, as well as of global problems of population, unemployment and environmental deterioration in all parts of the world.

Political and economic dialogue between donor and recipient countries must be given new content, going beyond the traditional framework of relations between them.

The Republic of Belarus hopes that the movement that began in the Philippines at the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies and developed further at Managua will make it possible for countries in transition and developing countries to unite and to develop a coordinated approach within the framework of the United Nations to consolidate democracy and create a free market.

Countries with economies in transition find themselves at different stages on their road to democracy and a market economy, and for that reason the success of reforms depends to a large extent on support from the international community. Hence, the Belarus delegation would propose that in 1996, under the auspices of the United Nations, an international conference on sustainable development in countries with economies in transition should be held. Co-organizers of the conference might include the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the European Regional Bureau of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other interested institutions.

We also believe that the granting of most-favoured-nation status, giving countries with economies in transition broad access to international markets and integrating them fully into the world economy, would be in the interests of the international community as a whole.

There is a growing need to broaden cooperation and strengthen coordination between the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and other regional organizations and arrangements. In this connection we welcome the granting of observer status in the General Assembly to the Commonwealth of Independent States. Belarus advocates a clearer definition of areas of cooperation between the United Nations and the CIS. Such cooperation could include joint efforts in peacemaking, disarmament, the environment, anti-terrorism, drug control and industrial conversion.

We believe that peace-keeping operations should not be allowed to overshadow the crucial problems of socio-economic development. Administrative and financial reform must become the most important aspect of United Nations renewal. One way of achieving that would be through a more rational distribution of the financial burden between the United Nations and other international institutions, including regional organizations. Another way would be to reject existing approaches to calculating the scale of assessments of Member States for the regular budget of the United Nations and for peace-keeping operations. It would be fairer to assess the contributions of States primarily in light of their actual capacity to pay.

In conclusion, may I say that the general debate at this session attests to the genuine interest of Member States in achieving the full realization of the United Nations potential as a truly effective international

organization, as a centre for harmonizing and coordinating the activities of the nations of the world. The Republic of Belarus fully shares that commitment and is ready to cooperate with all countries of the world community to achieve that goal, so that the end of this century may go down in history as the time when the aspirations and hopes of all mankind were finally met.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Mikhail Chygir, Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus was escorted from the rostrum.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.